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Roy Craig  
born March 19.<sup>th</sup> 1894.

Mary Augusta nee Maier  
born Febr. 3<sup>d</sup> 1889.

married: Febr. 14.<sup>th</sup> 1917

by Rev. H. F. Lawrence,

Thomasboro, Ill.

1917

1917



Wednesday. 14th  
Thomas H Craig

Died 14th Dec. 1932.

Age 48, Born 1884.

Aug 20. Died at 9.30 P.M.

On Dec 14. hurt at 10.30 A.M.



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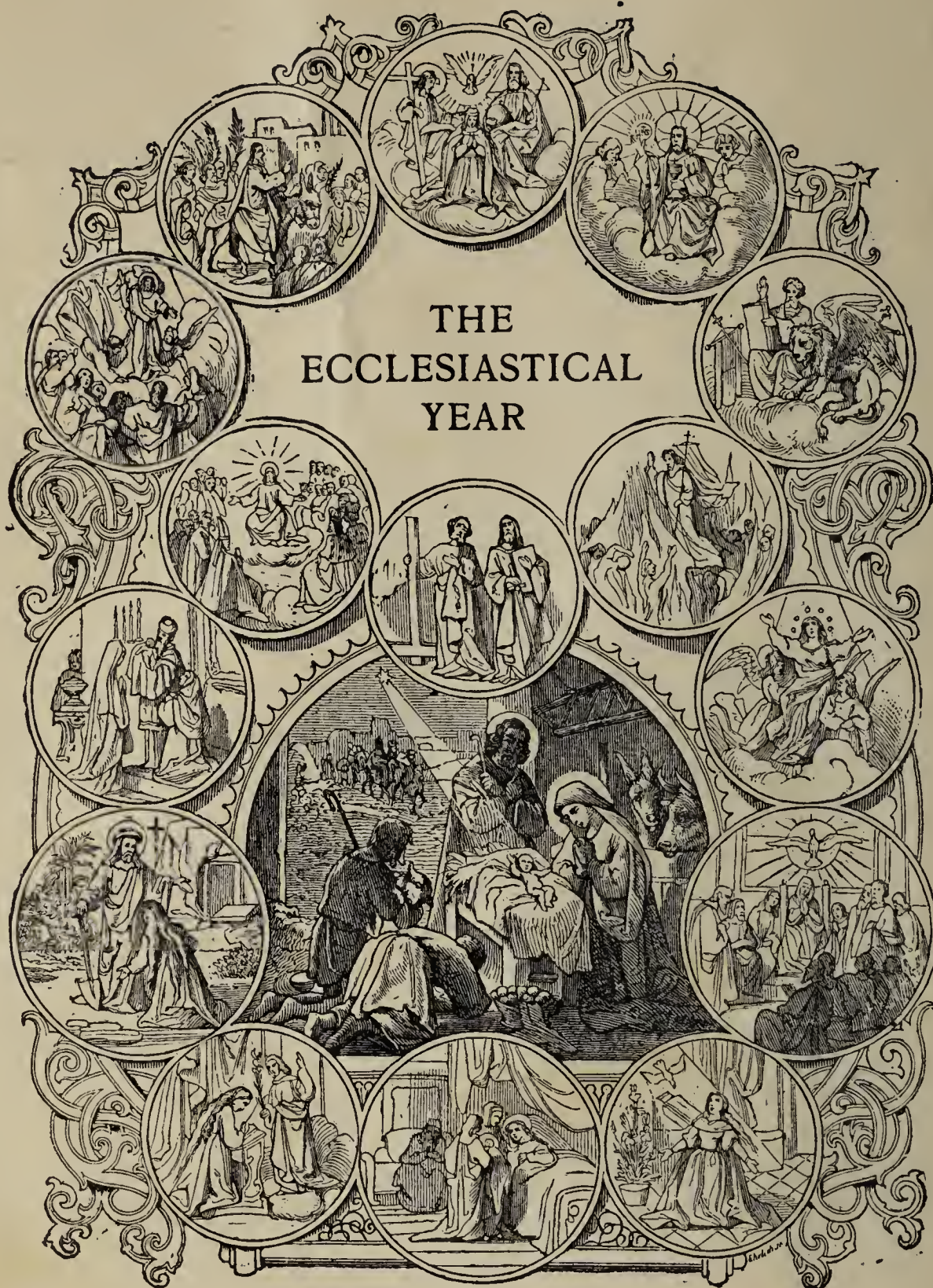
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Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.  
(Matt. xxiv. 35.)

Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

(Matt. xvi. 17, 18.)



EXPLANATION  
OF THE  
**EPISTLES AND GOSPELS**

FOR THE  
Sundays, Holydays and Festivals  
THROUGHOUT  
THE ECCLESIASTICAL YEAR,

TO WHICH ARE ADDED  
THE LIVES OF MANY SAINTS,

BY  
REV. LEONARD GOFFINE.

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TRANSLATED FROM THE LATEST GERMAN EDITION OF REV. GEORGE OTT

BY  
VERY REV. GERARD M. PILZ, O. S. B.

With many approbations of the Most Rev. Archbishops and Bishops of the  
United States.

FORTY-NINTH EDITION

FR. PUSTET & CO.,  
Printers to the Holy Apostolic See and the Sacred Congregation of Rites.  
RATISBON,  
ROME, NEW YORK AND CINCINNATI.

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1880

Leavenworth City, Kan.  
April 27th, 75.

Rev. and dear Father,

Let me thank you for the pains you have taken to bring before the Catholic Public of this country such an edifying and instructive book in an English dress. I very heartily approve of it — and will gladly lend my humble efforts to make it a householdbook in every Catholic family of our Vicariate.

Yours very respectfully

† LOUIS M. FINK, O. S. B.

Seton Hall College, South Orange, N. J.,  
March 15th, 84.

To Very Rev. Gerard Pilz, O. S. B.,

St. Mary's Priory, Newark, N. J.

I am very glad to learn that the Firm of Fr. Pustet & Co., is about to publish a new edition of Goffine's "Explanation of the Epistles and Gospels" translated by you from the German. It is a proof that the book is being extensively bought by Catholics in the States. Among the many religious books of instruction I consider Goffine one of the very best. I have no doubt that, if on every Sunday afternoon the Explanation of that particular Sunday's Gospel and Epistle were carefully read in every Catholic family, we would soon see a wonderful change for the better among our people.

WINAND MICHAEL WIGGER,  
Bishop of Newark.

St. Peter's Cathedral, No. 237. West Eighth Street.  
Cincinnati, Ohio. April 18th, 1884.

Goffine's Instructions is a book that I earnestly recommend to all Catholic families: and to persons not Catholic, who wish to instruct themselves in Christian truths. — It contains the Gospels and Epistles for all Sundays and festivals: with an instruction suited to each day. — It explains the meaning of each festival: and sets forth the spirit in which it should be observed. — It is particularly useful for persons who may for any reason not assist at the High Mass, and not hear a sermon. — It serves too as a manual of information concerning feasts and ceremonies, and Christian duties. It will bring blessings on any house in which it is kept and used.

† WILLIAM HENRY ELDER,  
Archbishop of Cincinnati.

We fully approve and recommend to the faithful the English work: "Explanation of the Epistles and Gospels of the Ecclesiastical year" translated from the German by Rev. Gerard Pilz, O. S. B.

14 Ja 44 Marshall

General 26 p 43 McCoy = ed. 49

The matter is most interesting to Christians. The perfect knowledge of the English and German languages which the Rev. translator possesses well qualifies him for the task which he has undertaken.

† M. DOMENEC,  
Bishop of Pittsburgh.

St. Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne,  
September 29th, 1887.

Messrs. Bernard King & Sons,

Dear Sirs,

With regard to the last edition of the translation of Goffine's "Explanation of the Epistles and Gospels for the Sundays, Holydays and Festivals, throughout the Ecclesiastical Year", which you have submitted for approval, I beg to say that in union with so many of the Catholic Bishops of America, I regard the work as most useful, and as eminently suited to the special needs of our people. There are very few books that can be read with more profit in Catholic families on Sundays and Holydays. Besides the explanation of the Epistles and Gospels, it contains a large amount of matter specially useful for our Catholic people at the present time. I can therefore recommend it warmly, and I wish it a large circulation in this Diocese.

I remain,

My dear Sirs,

Very faithfully yours,

† THOMAS J. CARR.

Covington, Ky. Feb. 12th, 1874.

We approve the English translation of the "Explanation of the Epistles and Gospels" by the Rev. Leonard Goffine and recommend it to the Faithful of our Diocese as a book eminently useful for instruction and the fostering of piety and devotion.

† AUGUSTUS MARIA,  
Eppus. Cov.

#### IMPRIMATUR.

Cincinnati, March 26th, 1874.

† J. B. PURCELL,  
Archiepisc. Cincinnatiensis.

Ft. Wayne, Ind., March 26th, 1874.

† JOS. DWENGER,  
Bishop of Ft. Wayne, Ind.

Columbus, O., June 18th, 1874.

† S. H. ROSECRANZ,  
Bishop of Columbus, O.



## PREFACE.

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ince its first appearance in the English language Goffine has steadily increased in popularity. The book has given such general satisfaction that bishops, as well as priests, have called attention to the work, and warmly recommended it to the faithful. It would, indeed, be difficult to find a book more suitable for the laity, imparting fuller instruction in faith and morals, or giving more lucid explanations of the ceremonies which the Church employs throughout the Ecclesiastical year. The firm of Fr. Pustet & Co. have, moreover, spared neither pains nor expense to render it superior to every other work of the kind.

Owing to the general demand, we find it necessary to publish another edition. For this purpose we have carefully revised the latest edition; corrected typogra-

phical errors and rendered certain obscure passages plain and clear; hence we flatter ourselves that we are able to place before the public a book greatly improved in every respect.

That it may find a home in every Catholic household; serve to strengthen Catholic faith, propagate true Christian morality, and lead to a better comprehension of the spirit of the Ecclesiastical year, is the fervent wish of

THE AUTHOR.





# ALMANAC.

The moveable feasts, that is, those that do not fall upon the same day every year, are all regulated according to Easter, and may be seen in the following table; therefore, if we know on what day of the month Easter falls, we can easily determine all the other moveable feasts, by attending to the Dominical letter. This letter is given in the second column and indicates the Sunday of the year opposite to which it stands. If in this table, after the date of the years from 1908 till 1943, two letters stand beside each other, then that year is a leap-year, and the first letter shows the Sunday until the 25th of February, the Feast of St. Matthias; from this date forward the second letter indicates the Sunday.

## A. TABLE OF MOVEABLE FEASTS.

A. D.	Dominical Letter.	Golden Number.	Epacts.	Septuagesima.	Ash-Wednesday.	Easter.	Ascension.	Pentecost.	Corpus Christi.	Number of Sundays after Pentecost.	First Sunday in Advent.
1908	ED	9	27	16 Febr.	4 March	19 April	28 May	7 June	18 June	24	29 Nov.
1909	C	10	8	7 Febr.	24 Febr.	11 April	20 May	30 May	10 June	25	28 Nov.
1910	B	11	19	23 Jan.	9 Febr.	27 March	5 May	15 May	26 May	27	27 Nov.
1911	A	12	*	12 Febr.	1 March	16 April	25 May	4 June	15 June	25	3 Dec.
1912	GF	13	11	4 Febr.	21 Febr.	7 April	16 May	26 May	6 June	26	1 Dec.
1913	E	14	22	19 Jan.	5 Febr.	23 March	1 May	11 May	22 May	28	30 Nov.
1914	D	15	3	8 Febr.	25 Febr.	12 April	21 May	31 May	11 June	25	29 Nov.
1915	C	16	14	31 Jan.	17 Febr.	4 April	13 May	23 May	3 June	26	28 Nov.
1916	BA	17	25	20 Febr.	8 March	23 April	1 June	11 June	22 June	24	3 Dec.
1917	G	18	6	4 Febr.	21 Febr.	8 April	17 May	27 May	7 June	26	2 Dec.
1918	F	19	17	27 Jan.	13 Febr.	31 March	9 May	19 May	30 May	27	1 Dec.
1919	E	1	29	16 Febr.	5 March	20 April	29 May	8 June	19 June	24	30 Nov.
1920	DC	2	10	1 Febr.	18 Febr.	4 April	13 May	23 May	3 June	26	28 Nov.
1921	B	3	21	23 Jan.	9 Febr.	27 March	5 May	15 May	26 May	27	27 Nov.
1922	A	4	2	12 Febr.	1 March	16 April	25 May	4 June	15 June	25	3 Dec.
1923	G	5	13	28 Jan.	14 Febr.	1 April	10 May	20 May	31 May	27	2 Dec.
1924	FE	6	24	17 Febr.	5 March	20 April	29 May	8 June	19 June	24	30 Nov.
1925	D	7	5	8 Febr.	25 Febr.	12 April	21 May	31 May	11 June	25	29 Nov.
1926	C	8	16	31 Jan.	17 Febr.	4 April	13 May	23 May	3 June	26	28 Nov.
1927	B	9	27	13 Febr.	2 March	17 April	26 May	5 June	16 June	24	27 Nov.
1928	AG	10	8	5 Febr.	22 Febr.	8 April	17 May	27 May	7 June	26	2 Dec.
1929	F	11	19	27 Jan.	13 Febr.	31 March	9 May	19 May	30 May	27	1 Dec.
1930	E	12	*	16 Febr.	5 March	20 April	29 May	8 June	19 June	24	30 Nov.
1931	D	13	11	1 Febr.	18 Febr.	5 April	14 May	24 May	4 June	26	29 Nov.
1932	CB	14	22	24 Jan.	10 Febr.	27 March	5 May	15 May	26 May	27	27 Nov.
1933	A	15	3	12 Febr.	1 March	16 April	25 May	4 June	15 June	25	3 Dec.
1934	G	16	14	28 Jan.	14 Febr.	1 April	10 May	20 May	31 May	27	2 Dec.
1935	F	17	25	17 Febr.	6 March	21 April	30 May	9 June	20 June	24	1 Dec.
1936	ED	18	6	9 Febr.	26 Febr.	12 April	21 May	31 May	11 June	25	29 Nov.
1937	C	19	17	24 Jan.	10 Febr.	28 March	6 May	16 May	27 May	27	28 Nov.
1938	B	1	29	13 Febr.	2 March	17 April	26 May	5 June	16 June	24	27 Nov.
1939	A	2	10	5 Febr.	22 Febr.	9 April	18 May	28 May	8 June	26	3 Dec.
1940	GF	3	21	21 Jan.	7 Febr.	24 March	2 May	12 May	23 May	28	1 Dec.
1941	E	4	2	9 Febr.	26 Febr.	13 April	22 May	1 June	12 June	25	30 Nov.
1942	D	5	13	1 Febr.	18 Febr.	5 April	14 May	24 May	4 June	26	29 Nov.
1943	C	6	24	21 Febr.	10 March	25 April	3 June	13 June	24 June	23	28 Nov.



## B. CALENDAR OF IMMOVEABLE FEASTS.

The days printed in open type in the almanac of immoveable feasts are Holydays. Ember-days are moveable and, therefore, are not given in this almanac; they are the Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays following the third Sunday in Advent, and the first Sunday in Lent, Pentecost Sunday, and the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross.

### JANUARY.

- 1 Circumcision of our Lord. Fulgentius, B. C.\*
- 2 Octave of St. Stephen. Macarius, Anch.
- 3 Octave of St. John. Genevieve, V.
- 4 Octave of the Holy Innocents. Titus, B.
- 5 Vigil of the Epiphany. Simeon Styl., C.
- 6 Epiphany.
- 7 Of the Octave of Epiphany. Lucian, Pr. M.
- 8 Apolinaris, B.
- 9 Of the Octave. Julian and Basilissa, MM.
- 10 Of the Octave. William, B. C.
- 11 Of the Octave. Theodosius Abb., C.; Hyginus, P. M.
- 12 Of the Octave. Arcadius, M.
- 13 Octave of Epiphany. Veronica, V.
- 14 Hilary, B. C. D.
- 15 Maurus, Abb., C.; Paul, Herm.
- 16 Marcellus, P. M.
- 17 Anthony, Abb.
- 18 Chair of St. Peter at Rome. Prisca, V. M.

- 19 Canute, K. M.
- 20 Fabian, P. and Sebastian, MM.
- 21 Agnes, V. M.
- 22 Vincent and Anastasius, MM.
- 23 Espousals of the B. V. M. and Joseph. Ildephonsus, B.
- 24 Timothy, B. M.
- 25 Conversion of St. Paul.
- 26 Policarp, B. M.
- 27 John Chrysostom, B. C. D.
- 28 Raymond of Penafort, C. Agnes, secundo.
- 29 Francis de Sales, B. C. D.
- 30 Martina, V. M.; Bathildis, Q.
- 31 Peter Nolasco, C.

Second Sunday after Epiphany, the Feast of the Most Holy Name of Jesus.

### FEBRUARY.

- 1 Ignatius, B. M.; Bridget, V. Abbess.
- 2 Purification of the B. V. M.
- 3 Blase, B. M.
- 4 Andrew Corsini, B. C.
- 5 Agatha, V. M.
- 6 Dorothy, V. M.
- 7 Romuald, Abb. C.
- 8 John of Matha, C.

\* Explanation of abbreviations: Abb.—Abbot; Ap.—Apostle; B.—Bishop; C.—Confessor; D.—Doctor; Her.—Hermit; K.—King; M.—Martyr; MM.—Martyrs; P.—Pope; PP.—Popes; Pen.—Penitent; Pr.—Priest; Q.—Queen; V.—Virgin; VV.—Virgins.



- 9 Apollonia, V. M.
- 10 Scholastica, V.
- 11 Saturninus and others, MM.; Euphrosina, V.
- 12 Benedict of Anian, Abb. C.; Eulalia, V. M.
- 13 Gregory II., P. C.; Catharine of Ricci, V.
- 14 Valentine, Pr. M.
- 15 Faustinus and Jovita, MM.
- 16 Onesimus, B. M.; Juliana, V. M.
- 17 Flavian, B. M.
- 18 Simeon, B. M.
- 19 Conrad, C.
- 20 Eucherius, B. C.
- 21 Severianus, B. M.
- 22 Chair of Peter at Antioch. Margaret of Cordona.
- 23 Peter Damian, B. C. D.
- 24 Mathias, Ap. M.
- 25 Caesarius, C.; Walburga, V. Abbess.
- 26 Alexander, B. C.
- 27 Leander, B. C.
- 28 Romanus, Abb.

In a leap-year the Feast of St. Mathias is celebrated on the 25 th.

## MARCH.

- 1 David, B. C.; Swidbert, B. C.
- 2 Simplicius, P. C.
- 3 Cunigundes, empress.
- 4 Casimir, prince and C.
- 5 Adrian and Eubulus, MM.; Gerasimus, Abb.
- 6 Victor and Companions, MM.; Fridolin, Abb.
- 7 Thomas Aquinas, C. D.
- 8 John of God, C.
- 9 Frances of Rome, widow.

- 10 The Forty Martyrs of Sebaste.
- 11 Eulogius, Pr. M.; Gumbert, B.
- 12 Gregory I. P. C. D.
- 13 Nicephorus, B. C.; Euphrasia, V.
- 14 Mathilda, Q.
- 15 Zachary, P. C.; Longinus, M.
- 16 Heribert, B.
- 17 Patrick, B. C., Apostle of Ireland.
- 18 Gabriel, Archangel; Edward, K. M.
- 19 Joseph, Sponse of the B. V. M. and Patron of the Universal Church.
- 20 Guthbert, B. C.
- 21 Benedict, Abb.
- 22 Basil, Pr. M.
- 23 Turbius, B. C.; Nicholas of the Flue, Herm.
- 24 Irenaeus, B. M.
- 25 Annunciation of the B. V. M.
- 26 Ludger, B. C.
- 27 Rupert, B. C.
- 28 Gontran, K. C.
- 29 Eustasius, Abb.
- 30 John Climacus, Abb. C.
- 31 Guy, Abb.

The Feast of the Seven Dolors is celebrated on the Friday before Palm Sunday.

## APRIL.

- 1 Hugh, B. C.
- 2 Francis of Paula, C.
- 3 Richard, B. C.; Mary of Egypt., Pen.
- 4 Isidore, B. D.
- 5 Vincent Ferrer, C.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>6 Sixtus I., P. M.; Celestine, P. C.; William, Abb.<br/> 7 Aphraates, Anch.; Herman Joseph, C.<br/> 8 Dionysius, B. C.; Albert, B.<br/> 9 Mary Cleophas.<br/> 10 Mechtildis, V. Abbess.<br/> 11 Leo, the Great, P. D.<br/> 12 Zeno, B. C.; Julius, P. C.<br/> 13 Hermenegild, Q. M.<br/> 14 Tibertius, Valerian, Maximus, MM.<br/> 15 Peter Gonsales, C.<br/> 16 Joseph Labre, C.<br/> 17 Anicetus, P. M.<br/> 18 Apollonius, M.<br/> 19 Leo IX., P. C.<br/> 20 Marcellus, B.; Sulpitius and Servilianus, MM.<br/> 21 Anselm, B. C. D.<br/> 22 Soter and Cajus, PP. MM.<br/> 23 George, M.<br/> 24 Fidelis M.; Mellitus, B. C.<br/> 25 Mark, Evangelist.<br/> 26 Cletus and Marcellinus, PP. MM.<br/> 27 Theophilus, B. C.<br/> 28 Paul of the Cross, C.; Vitalis, M.<br/> 29 Peter, M.<br/> 30 Catharine of Siena, V.</p> | <p>7 Stanislaus, B. M.<br/> 8 Apparition of Michael the Archangel.<br/> 9 Gregory Nazianzen, B. C.<br/> 10 Antoninus, B. C.<br/> 11 Mamertus, B. C.<br/> 12 Nereus, Achilleus and Pancratius, MM.<br/> 13 John the Silent, B. C.; Servatius, B.<br/> 14 Boniface, M.<br/> 15 Peter, Andrew and Companions, MM.<br/> 16 John Nepomucene, M.; Simon Stock, C.<br/> 17 Paschal Baylon, C.<br/> 18 Venantius, M.<br/> 19 Dunstan, B. C.<br/> 20 Bernardine of Sienna, C.<br/> 21 Felix of Cantalicio, C.; Hospitius, C.<br/> 22 Yvo, C.<br/> 23 Julia, V. M.<br/> 24 B. V. M., Help of Christians.<br/> 25 Gregory VII., P. C.; Urban, P. M.<br/> 26 Philip Neri, C.; Augustine, Apostle of England.<br/> 27 Magdalene of Pazzi, V.; Venerable Bede, C.<br/> 28 Germanus, B. C.<br/> 29 Maximinus, B. C.; Cyril, M.<br/> 30 Felix, P. M.; Ferdinand III., K.<br/> 31 Petronilla, V.</p> |
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Third Sunday after Easter,  
Patronage of St. Joseph.

## MAY.

- 1 Philip and James, App.
- 2 Anastasius, B. C. D.
- 3 Finding of the Holy Cross; Alexander, P. and Companions, MM.
- 4 Monica, widow.
- 5 Pius V., P. C.
- 6 John before the Latin Gate.

## JUNE.

- 1 Justin, M.; Pamphilus, Pr. M.
- 2 Pothinus, B.; Marcellinus, Peter and Erasmus, MM.
- 3 Clotildis, Q.



- 4 Optatus, B. C.; Francis Caraciolo, C.
- 5 Boniface, Apostle of Germany, B. M.
- 6 Norbert, B. C.
- 7 Paul, B. M.; Robert, Abb. C.
- 8 Medard, B. C.
- 9 Primus and Felicianus, MM.; Columkill, C.
- 10 Margaret, Q.
- 11 Barnabas, Ap. M.
- 12 John a Sancto Facundo, Conf.
- 13 Anthony of Padua, C.
- 14 Basil the Great, B. C. D.
- 15 Vitus, Crescentia and Modestus, MM.
- 16 John Francis Regis, C.; Luitgardis, V.
- 17 Angela Merici, V.
- 18 Marcus and Marcellinus, MM.
- 19 Gervase and Protase, MM.; Juliana Falconieri, V.
- 20 Silverius, P. M.; Florentina, V.
- 21 Aloysius Gonzaga, C.
- 22 Paulinus of Nola, B. C.
- 23 Etheldreda, V. Abbess.
- 24 John the Baptist.
- 25 Prosper, C.; William of Monte Vergine, Abb.
- 26 John and Paul, MM.
- 27 Ladislav, K. C.
- 28 Irenaeus, B. D. M.; Leo II., P. C.
- 29 Peter and Paul, App.
- 30 Commemoration of St. Paul.

Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi, Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus,

## JULY.

- 1 Octave of St. John the Baptist.
- 2 Visitation of the B. V. M.
- 3 Phocas, M., Heliodorus, B.
- 4 Ulrich, B.; Odo, B. C.
- 5 Cyril and Method., BB. CC.
- 6 Paladius, B. C.
- 7 Willibald, B. C.
- 8 Killian, B. M.; Elizabeth, Q.
- 9 Ephrem, C. D.
- 10 Felicitas and her 7 sons.
- 11 Pius I., P. M.
- 12 John Qualbert, Abb. C.
- 13 Anacletus, P. M.
- 14 Bonaventure, B. C. D.
- 15 Henry II., emperor, C.
- 16 Our Lady of Mount Carmel.
- 17 Alexius, C.
- 18 Camillus of Lellis, C.; Symphorosa, with her seven sons, MM.
- 19 Vincent of Paul, C.; Arsenius, Anch.
- 20 Jerome Emilian, C.; Margaret, V. M.
- 21 Proxedes, V.
- 22 Mary Magdalen, penit.
- 23 Apollinaris, B. M.; Liborius, B. C.
- 24 Christina, V. M.
- 25 James the Greater, Ap.; Christopher, M.
- 26 Anne, Mother of the B. V. M.
- 27 Pantaleon, M.
- 28 Nazarius and Celsus, MM.
- 29 Martha, V.
- 30 Abdon and Sennen, MM.
- 31 Ignatius Loyola, C.

The First Sunday of July, Feast of the Precious Blood. Third Sunday, Festival of the Scapular,

## AUGUST.

- 1 St. Peter's Chains. The Machabees, MM.
- 2 Alphonsus Liguori, B. C. D.
- 3 Finding of the Relics of St. Stephen, Protomartyr.
- 4 Dominic, C.
- 5 B. V. M. ad Nives.
- 6 Transfiguration of our Lord. Xystus, P. M.
- 7 Cajetan, C.; Donatus, B. M.
- 8 Cyriacus, Largus and Smaragdus, MM.
- 9 Romanus, soldier, M.
- 10 Lawrence, M.
- 11 Philomena, V. M.; Tiburtius and Susanna, MM.
- 12 Clare, V. Abbess.
- 13 Hippolytus, Pr. M.; Casian, M.
- 14 Eusebius, Pr. M.
- 15 Assumption of the B. V. M.
- 16 Hyacinth, C.; Roch, C.
- 17 Liberatus, Abb. M.
- 18 Agapitus, M.; Helen, empress.
- 19 Louis, B. C.
- 20 Bernard, Abb. D.
- 21 Jane Frances de Chantal, widow.
- 22 Timothy and Compan., MM.
- 23 Philip Beniti, C.
- 24 Bartholomew, Ap.
- 25 Louis, K. C.
- 26 Zephyrinus, P. M.
- 27 Joseph Calasanctius, C.; Caesarius, B. C.
- 28 Augustine, B. C. D.; Hermes, M.
- 29 Beheading of John the Baptist.; Sabina, M.

30 Rose of Lima, V.; Felix and Audactus, MM.

31 Raymund Nonnatus, C.; Isabella, V.

The Sunday within the Octave of the Assumption, Feast of St. Joachim, father of the B. V. M. The Sunday after the Octave of the Assumption, Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

## SEPTEMBER.

- 1 Giles, Abb. C.
- 2 Stephen, K. C.
- 3 Simeon Stylites the younger.
- 4 Marcellus and Valerian, MM., Rosalia, V.
- 5 Lawrence Justinian, B. C.
- 6 Magnus, Abb.; Pambo, Abb.
- 7 Regina, V. M.; Cloud, C.
- 8 Nativity of the B. V. M.
- 9 Gorgonius and Companions, MM.
- 10 Nicholas of Tolentino, C.
- 11 Protus and Hyacinthus, MM.
- 12 Guy, C.
- 13 Eulogius and Amatus, BB. CC.
- 14 Exaltation of the Holy Cross.
- 15 Nicetas, M.; Nicomedes, M.
- 16 Cornelius, P. M. and Cyprian, B. M.
- 17 Stigmata of Francis of Assisi. Lambert, B. M.
- 18 Joseph of Cupertino, C.
- 19 Januarius and Companions, MM.
- 20 Eustace and Companions, MM.



- 21 Matthew, Ap. and Evangelist.
- 22 Thomas of Villanova, B. C.; Maurice and Companions, MM.
- 23 Linus, P. M.; Thecla, V. M.
- 24 B. V. M. de Mercede. Gerardus, B. M.
- 25 Cleophas, M.
- 26 Cyprian and Justina, MM.
- 27 Cosmas and Damian, MM.
- 28 Wenceslaus, Duke, M.
- 29 Michael, Archangel.
- 30 Jerome, Pr. M.

The Sunday within the Octave of the Nativity of the B. V. M., the Holy Name of Mary. The following Sunday, Feast of the Seven Dolors of the B. V. M.

## OCTOBER.

- 1 Remigius, B. C.
- 2 The Holy Guardian Angels.
- 3 Dionysius, B. M.
- 4 Francis of Assisi, C.
- 5 Placidus, Abb. M. and Companions, MM.
- 6 Bruno, B. C.
- 7 Mark, P. C.
- 8 Bridget, widow.
- 9 Dionysius, B. M. and Companions, MM.
- 10 Francis Borgia, C.
- 11 Paulinus, Probus, Adronicus, MM.
- 12 Wilfrid, B. C.
- 13 Edward, K. C.
- 14 Callistus, P. M.
- 15 Theresia, V.
- 16 Gall, Abb.
- 17 Hedwig, widow.
- 18 Luke, Evangelist.

- 19 Peter of Alcantara, C.
- 20 John Cantius, C.; Artemius, M.
- 21 Hilarion, Abb.; Ursula and Companions, MM.
- 22 Donatus, B. C.
- 23 Ignatius, Patriarch of Constant.; Severin, B. C.
- 24 Raphael, Archangel.
- 25 Crysanthus and Daria, MM.; Boniface I., P. C.
- 26 Evaristus, P. M.
- 27 Frumentius, B. C.
- 28 Simon and Jude, App.
- 29 Narcissus, B. C.
- 30 Marcellus, M.; Serapion, B.
- 31 Quentin, M.

The first Sunday of October, Feast of the Holy Rosary.

The second Sunday, Feast of the Maternity of the B. V. M.

The third Sunday, Feast of the Purity of the B. V. M.

The fourth Sunday, Feast of the Patronage of the B. V. M.

## NOVEMBER.

- 1 All Saints.
- 2 All Souls.
- 3 Malachy, B. C.
- 4 Charles Borromeo, B. C.; Vitalis and Agricola, MM.
- 5 Emericius, C.; Elizabeth, mother of John Baptist.
- 6 Leonard, Herm. C.
- 7 Willibrord, B. C.
- 8 Octave of All Saints. The Four Crowned Brothers, MM.
- 9 Dedication of St. John Lateran.
- 10 Andrew Avellino, C.
- 11 Martin, B. C.
- 12 Martin, P. M.

# XVI

## ALMANAC.

- 13 Didacus, C.; Stanislaus Kostka, C.
- 14 Lawrence O' Joole, B. C.
- 15 Gertrude, V.
- 16 Edmund, B. C.; Othmar, Abb.
- 17 Gregory Thaumaturgus, B. C.
- 18 Dedication of Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul.
- 19 Elizabeth of Hungary.
- 20 Edmund, K. M.; Felix de Valois, C.
- 21 Presentation of the B.V.M.
- 22 Cecilia, V. M.
- 23 Clement, P. M.
- 24 John of the Cross, C.; Columban, Abb. C.
- 25 Catharine, V. M.
- 26 Peter, B. M.; Conrad, B.
- 27 Maximus, B. C.; Virgil, B. C.
- 28 Stephen the Younger, M.
- 29 Saturninus, B. M.
- 30 Andrew, Ap.

### DECEMBER.

- 1 Eligius, B. C.
- 2 Bibiana, V. M.
- 3 Francis Xavier, C.
- 4 Peter Chrysologus, B. C. D.; Barbara, V. M.
- 5 Sabbas, Abb. C.
- 6 Nicholas, B. C.
- 7 Ambrose, B. D.


- 8 Immaculate Conception of the B. V. M.
- 9 Leocadia, V. M.
- 10 Melchiades, P.
- 11 Damasus, P. M.
- 12 Epimachus, Alexander, etc. MM.
- 13 Lucy, V. M.; Ottilia, V. Abbess.
- 14 Spiridion, B. C.; Nicasius, B. M.
- 15 Octave of the Immaculate Conception. Eusebius, B.M.
- 16 Odo, B. C.; Adelaide, empress.
- 17 Lazarus, B.; Florian, M.
- 18 Expectation of the B.V.M.; Gratian, B.
- 19 Timothy, M.; Remesius.
- 20 Philogonius, B. C.; Christian, B.
- 21 Thomas, Ap.
- 22 Ischyron, M.; Zeno, soldier, M.
- 23 Victoria, V. M.; Servulus, C.
- 24 Thrasilla and Emiliana, VV.; Adam and Eve.
- 25 Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 26 Stephen, Protomartyr.
- 27 John, Ap. Evangelist.
- 28 Holy Innocents.
- 29 Thomas á Becket, B.C.M.
- 30 Sabinus, B. M.
- 31 Sylvester, P. C.



**GOFFINE'S**  
**ECCLESIASTICAL YEAR.**

**PART I.**

**EXPLANATION**  
OF THE  
**EPISTLES AND GOSPELS**  
FOR  
**SUNDAYS AND FESTIVALS,**  
TO WHICH ARE ADDED  
**INSTRUCTIONS ON CHRISTIAN FAITH AND MORALS.**



## SHORT INSTRUCTIONS

ON THE

### MANNER OF USING THIS BOOK

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My dear Christian, before you commence to read these instructions:

- I. Place yourself in the presence of God.
- II. Humble yourself before Him, sincerely imploring His forgiveness.
- III. Pray that you may be enlightened, that you may love Him; recommend yourself to the Blessed Virgin and to the saints.

Then, step by step, read the instructions carefully. After each point reflect upon the truth you have just read, asking yourself: 1. What must I believe? That which I have just read. Then make an act of faith, saying: "O Lord! I will believe this truth, help my faith, increase my faith!" 2. What must I now do? I must correct the faults opposed to this truth. 3. What have I done heretofore? Unhappily, O God, I have acted in contradiction to this truth; how differently, O Jesus, from Thee and from Thy saints! 4. What shall I now do? Here make a firm resolution to put these truths into immediate practice, to contend against and overcome the faults opposed to them, and to acquire new virtue.

Then finish the reading with acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition; repeat the same each time you read in this or in any book of devotion, and you will soon perceive that great benefit for your soul is derived from such exercises.

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## EXPLANATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING THE ECCLESIASTICAL YEAR.

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*What is understood by the ecclesiastical year?*

Y the ecclesiastical year is understood the succession of those holy days and seasons, reëcurring with each succeeding year, which the Church has appointed to be celebrated, that the faithful may be reminded of the divine graces and mysteries, may praise God, and occupy themselves, at such times, with pious, devotional exercises in His honor, and for their own sanctification.

*When does the ecclesiastical year begin, and when terminate?*

It begins with the first Sunday of Advent and concludes with the last Sunday after Pentecost.

*How is the ecclesiastical year divided?*

Into Sundays, week-days, festivals, holydays, and fast-days.

*What is Sunday?*

Sunday is the first day of the week, sanctified in an especial manner by God Himself; therefore, it should be devoted exclusively to His service. The Apostles called it the "Lord's Day".

*Why should Sunday be devoted exclusively to God?*

Because it is but proper that man, who is created for the service of God only, should reserve at least one out of the seven days of the week for that service, and for the salvation of his own soul; again, in the beginning, God ordered that on the seventh day or Saturday, on which He rested after finishing the work of creation, (*Exodus XX, 11.*) man should also rest, (*Exodus XX, 8. 9. 10.*) abstain from all worldly employment, and attend only to the worship of God. This was the Sabbath, or day of rest, of the Jews which they were required to keep holy. (*Lev. XXIII, 3.*)

But the Catholic Church, authorized by Christ, inspired by the Holy Ghost, and directed by the Apostles, has made Sunday, the first day of the week, the day of rest for Christians. The holy martyr Justin (*† 167 A. D.*) makes men-



tion of this fact. Sunday was designated as the day of rest for the Christians partly to distinguish them from the Jews, as well as, for the following reasons: On this day God commenced the creation of the world, so too on this day He crowned the glorious work of our Redemption by Christ's Resurrection; on this day, as Bellarmine says, Christ was born, was circumcized, and was baptized; and on this day the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles.

*Why is this day called Sunday?*

Because on this day, as St. Ambrose says, Christ, the sun of justice, having driven away the darkness of hell, shone forth, as the rising sun, in the glory of the Resurrection. (*Malach. IV, 2.*)

*How should the Catholic keep Sunday holy, and how does he profane it?*

Sunday is kept holy by abstaining from all servile work, performed for wages or gain, or not commanded by necessity; by passing the day in works of piety; in hearing Mass devoutly, listening to the word of God in church and spending the day at home in a quiet manner pleasing to God. If justly prevented from being present at church on Sundays and holydays of obligation, we should unite, in spirit, with the priest and the faithful assembled there, and pray fervently; during the rest of the day we should read books of devotion, and endeavor to perform some work of charity. Sunday is profaned by being spent either in idleness, or in unnecessary servile work, or in that which is still worse, debauchery, gambling, dancing, and other sinful actions. It would be better, that is, less sinful, as St. Augustine says, to till the field on such days, than to spend them in frivolous, dangerous, and sinful pleasures. But it is not forbidden, after having properly attended divine service, to participate on Sundays and holydays in honorable, decorous entertainment of the mind and heart.

*What ought a Catholic to think of dances and fairs on Sundays and holydays of obligation?*

The amusement of dancing on such days cannot possibly be pleasing to God. Dancing in general is an occasion of sin. The council of Baltimore protests against round dances especially, because they are highly indecent. Buying and selling without great necessity, as also holding fairs on Sundays and holydays are likewise sinful. God never ordained His days of rest for the gratification of avarice.



*What rewards are offered for keeping Sunday sacred, and what punishment is incurred by its desecration?*

The Old Law promised blessings, spiritual and temporal to those who kept holy the Sabbath day, (*Lev. XXVI.*) and threatened all evils and misfortunes to those who desecrated it. Thus, to show how much He condemned its profanation, God caused a man to be stoned to death for gathering wood upon that day. (*Num. XV, 32.*) The Catholic Church from her very beginning, and in several councils (*Council. Elv. A. D. 313, Paris 829.*) has enjoined the keeping holy of Sundays and holydays, and experience proves in our days especially, that, as the consequence of the constantly increasing profanation of Sundays and holydays, immorality and poverty are growing greater; a manifest sign that God never blesses those, who refuse to devote a few days of the year to His honor and service.

PRAYER FOR ALL SUNDAYS. O God, who hast appointed Sunday, that we should serve Thee and participate in Thy grace, grant that always on this day our faith may be renewed, and our hearts incited to the praise and adoration of Thy Majesty; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

*What are festivals?*

Festivals are days set apart by the Catholic Church, to celebrate with due solemnity the mysteries of religion, or the memory of the saints. Hence they are of two kinds, the festivals of our Lord, and the festivals of the saints.

*Has the Church the right to institute festivals and fast-days?*

To deny her such right would be to place her below the Jewish Synagogue, which in acknowledgment of benefits received, established many festivals, such as the Feast of Lots; (*Esther IX, 26.*) the festival in honor of Judith's victory over Holofernes; (*Judith XVI, 31*) the feast of the Dedication of the Temple, (*2. Mac. 4, 56.*) which our Lord Himself celebrated with them. (*John X. 22.*) Should not the Catholic Church, therefore, celebrate with equal solemnity the far greater blessings she has received from God? God Himself, through Moses, commanded the Jews to celebrate and, as it were, to immortalize by the Pasch their redemption from Egyptian captivity; the reception of the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai, by the festival of Pentecost; their forty years journey through the desert,



and their living in tents, by the feast of the Tabernacles. How unjustly then would the Church conduct herself, if she would not commemorate, as the Old Law did, by the institution of certain festivals in honor of God and His saints, those graces of which He has made her partaker, through Christ and His saints, since our Lord gave to the Apostles and to the bishops, their successors, the power to bind and to loose, that is, to make ordinances and, as circumstances may require, changes for the salvation of the people! (*Matt. XVIII. 18.*) These festivals are instituted to assist the faithful in working out their salvation. And from this very right of the Church to institute festivals, follows her right to change or abolish them at her discretion, whenever her object of directing them to the honor of God is no longer reached, and the faithful in this case would be as much bound to obey her, as when she established them, for: Who hears not the Church, says Christ, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican. (*Matt. XVIII. 17.*)

*How are holydays and festivals to be observed?*

They are to be observed like Sunday. Besides we should endeavor to understand well the mysteries and blessings of God and the lives and labors of the saints on whose account the festivals have been instituted. This we can do by hearing Mass and attending catechetical instruction, or by reading devotional books at home, in order to induce ourselves to love and praise God and to imitate the saints, which is the object the Church has in view in instituting festivals. But, unfortunately, as this object of the Church is responded to by few, and as, on the contrary, the holydays are spent very differently from what the Church intended, she has done well in abolishing certain festivals, or transferring them to Sunday, that they may be, at least, better regarded, and no offence offered to God by their profanation.

*What are fast-days?*

Fast-days are those days on which the Church commands us to mortify the body by abstaining from flesh-meat, or by taking but one full meal in the day. Those days on which besides abstinence from meat, but one full meal is allowed, are called Fast-days of Obligation; those days on which it is only required to abstain from flesh-meat, are called Days of Abstinence.



*Can the Church institute fast-days?*

She can, because the Church of Christ, as mother of the faithful, has the power to make all useful and necessary regulations for the salvation of their souls. In doing so she only follows the example of our Lord, her Head, for He fasted, and of the Apostles, who, even in their day, ordered the Christians to abstain from blood and things strangled, (*Acts. XV. 29.*) in order not to prevent the conversion of the Jews, who, on account of the Old Law, abhorred the blood and meat of strangled animals. This prohibition was removed when this danger no longer existed. "Fasting is no new invention, as many imagine", writes the Father of the Church, Basil the Great, "it is a precious treasure, which our forefathers preserved long before our days, and have handed down to us."

*Why has the Church instituted fast-days, and for what purpose?*

The Catholic Church, from the very beginning, has looked upon external fasting, only as a means of penance. Her object in instituting fast-days, therefore, was and is, that by fasting the faithful should mortify their flesh and their evil desires, seek to pacify God, render satisfaction for their sins, practice obedience to the Church, their mother, and by practicing these virtues become more zealous and fervent in the service of God. Innumerable texts of Scripture, as well as experience prove that fasting aids to this end. The Fathers of the Church praise very highly the usefulness of fasting, and our Lord predicted that the Church, His spouse, would fast, when He, her Bridegroom, should be taken from her. (*Matt. IX. 15.*)

*What are we to think of those heretics and Catholics who condemn the command of the Church?*

Those Catholics who condemn this command, condemn their mother, the Church, and Christ her founder, her head, who fasted; they give scandal to the faithful children of the Church, and do themselves great harm, because they become slaves of the flesh, subjecting their souls to the evil desires of the body and thus fall into many sins. They prove moreover, that they have departed from the spirit of the early Christians who fasted with great strictness; that they are too cowardly to overcome themselves, and offer God the sacrifice of obedience to His Church. The heretics have the Bible against them, if they assert that the command of the Church to fast is useless and unnecessary: (*Acts XIII, 2, 3.*)



that Bible which they so often quote, as well as all Christian antiquity, experience and reason. One of the Fathers of the Church, St. Basil, writes: "Honor ever the ancient practice of fasting, for it is as old as the creation of man. We must fast if we would return to paradise from which gluttony expelled us." Every rational, reflecting person must acknowledge, as experience teaches, that bodily health, and unimpaired mind are best preserved and improved by temperance and abstinence, especially from flesh-meat. It was by continual fasting that many of the fathers of the desert preserved vigorous health, often living beyond the usual limit of man's age, sometimes for more than a century, even in tropical countries, where a lifetime is generally shorter than in colder climates. St. Paul, the first hermit, lived one hundred and thirteen years; St. Anthony one hundred and five; St. Arsenius one hundred and twenty; St. John, the silent, one hundred and four; St. Theodosius, abbot, one hundred and five. The Catholic Church here proves herself a good mother to us, for in this command she regards not only the spiritual, but also the corporal welfare of her children. The words of our Lord: "Not that which goeth into the mouth, defileth a man: but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man", (*Matt. XV. 11.*) was meant for the Pharisees who judged certain kinds of food prohibited by law, or that had been touched by unclean hands, to be unclean. Had He intended it to be understood in the sense the contemners of fasting assert, He would have declared intoxication by drinking, or even the taking of poison, to be permitted; certainly, food being the gift of God and therefore good, does not make man a sinner, but disobedience to the command, and gluttony, make him such.

*Which are the most important fast-days, and days of abstinence?*

All the week-days of Lent; the Fridays in Advent; the Ember-days for the four seasons of the year; and the Vigils of All-Saints, Christmas, Whitsunday, and the Assumption. If the Feast, however, occurs on Monday, the vigil is kept on the Saturday before; as Sunday is never a fast-day.\*

The days of abstinence are, all Fridays in the year, excepting Christmas day when it falls on Friday; and all

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\* In some Dioceses, the Fridays of Advent, except the one which is an Ember-day, are not fast-days of obligation.



fast-days of obligation, excepting those on which the use of flesh-meat is expressly allowed by the proper authorities. Soldiers and sailors in the service of the United States of America, however, are exempted from the rule of abstinence throughout the year; Ash-Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday in Holy Week, the Vigils of the Assumption and Christmas excepted.

A day of abstinence is that on which it is not allowed to eat flesh-meat.

*What are the Ember-days and why are they instituted?*

The Ember-days are the first Wednesday, Friday and Saturday of each of the four seasons of the year, set apart as fast-days by the Catholic Church. According to the testimony of Pope Leo, they originated in the time of the Apostles, who were inspired by the Holy Ghost to dedicate each season of the year to God by a few days of penance, or, as it were, to pay three days interest, every three months, on the graces received from God. The Church has also commanded us to fast at the beginning of each of the four seasons of the year, because it is at this time that she ordains the priests and other servants of the Church, which even the Apostles did with much prayer and fasting. Thus she desires that during the Ember-days Christians should fervently ask of God by prayer, by fasting and other good works, worthy pastors and servants, on whom depends the welfare of the whole Christian flock; she desires that in the spring Ember-days we should ask God's blessing for the fertility of the earth; in summer for the preservation of the fruits of the field, in autumn when the harvest is ripe, and in winter when it is sheltered, that we should offer to God by fasting and prayer a sacrifice of thanks, petitioning Him to assist us, that we may not use His gifts for our soul's detriment, but that we refer all praise to Him, the fountain of all good, and assist our neighbor according to our means.

*What are Vigils?*

They are the eves of certain festivals, which the Church has ordered to be observed as fast-days. The early Christians prepared themselves by fasting, praying and watching, as signified by the latin word "*Vigiliæ*," for the coming festival. Thus to this day in the Vigil-Mass the priest does not say: "*Ite Missa est*," (*Go ye, Mass is over*), but "*Benedicamus Domino*," (*Let us praise the Lord*), because in olden times when Mass was celebrated at night, the Christians were exhorted to continue praising God in Church until the dawn of the festival. This nightwatch the Church has now



abolished, partly on account of the declining zeal of the Christians, and partly on account of the fear of its being abused; the fast, however, has been retained to honor God and His saints, to obtain their intercession, and to mortify the flesh according to their example. "By fasting on the eves of festivals," says St. Bernard, "we learn that we can enter heaven only through many sufferings."

*Why does the Church forbid the use of flesh-meat on Fridays and Saturdays?*

"The Church," says Pope Innocent, "forbids the use of flesh-meat on Fridays because our Lord died on that day, and on Saturdays because on that day He rested in the sepulchre, and also that we may be better prepared by this abstinence for Sunday." In many dioceses the use of flesh-meat is allowed on Saturdays, and the permission is so marked in the calendar, and every year announced to the people; for this dispensation the faithful should perform another good work and fast the more conscientiously on Fridays.

*Who is bound to fast, and who not?*

All Christians over seven years of age, unless for some reason excused, are required under pain of mortal sin, to abstain from flesh-meat on all days of fasting and abstinence; all those who are over twenty-one years of age are allowed to take but one full meal a day. A severe illness or a dispensation obtained for valid reasons, excuses from abstinence on Fridays: those are dispensed from fasting on one meal, who cannot fulfil the command without great inconvenience, such as: those recovering from sickness, pregnant and nursing women, old and infirm people, those who are engaged in hard labor, undertaking severe journeys, and the poor who have no full meals; also, those who are prevented by the fast from some better work, incumbent upon their office, or dictated by Christian charity. These persons mentioned are excused from fasting, in so far that they are permitted to eat, whenever they need food, but must still abstain from the use of flesh-meat unless dispensed from the command of abstinence. They should, however, be sincerely grieved to be unable to unite with the whole Church in such meritorious work, and should endeavor to make amends by prayer, alms and other good deeds.

*Who are those who sin against fasting?*

First, those who deliberately and without sufficient cause do not abstain from the use of flesh-meat; secondly, those who without any of the excuses mentioned, take more than one



full meal a day; thirdly, those who eat between the time of meals; fourthly, those who indulge in long, extravagant and sumptuous dinners, and excessive drinking, all of which are opposed to the spirit of penance and mortification. Lastly, when on a fast-day meat and fish are used at the same meal.

*Is it not allowed to eat any thing in the evening on fast days?*

The early Christians were so rigorous in their penance that they contented themselves with one temperate meal on fast-days, and that was generally of bread and water, taken only in the evening; but as, in the course of time, the penitential zeal declined, the Church like an indulgent mother permitted, besides the full meal at noon, a small quantity of food to be taken in the evening, about as much as would make the fourth part of a regular meal, or not to appear scrupulous, as much as would not cause too great an aggravation, or exhaust the strength necessary for the next day's labor; but "to wish to feel no aggravation in fasting, is to wish not to fast at all."

*With what intention should we fast?*

First, with the intention of doing penance and punishing the body for the sins which we have committed by yielding to its evil desires; secondly, to satisfy God and to unite ourselves with our Lord in his forty days fast: thirdly, to obtain strength to lead a chaste, pure life; fourthly, to give to the poor that which is saved by fasting.

NOTE. Whatever is necessary to be understood further in regard to this subject, will be found in the instructions on the forty days fast.

## INSTRUCTIONS ON ADVENT.

*What is the meaning of Advent, and what do we understand by the term?*

**T**HE word Advent signifies coming, and by it is understood the visible coming of the Son of God into this world, at two different times.

*When was the first coming of Christ?*

It was when the Son of God, conceived of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the immaculate Virgin Mary, was born, according to the flesh, in the fulness of time, and



sanctified the world by His coming, for which the patriarchs and prophets had so longed. (*Gen. XLIX. 10.; Isai. LXIV. 1.; Luke, X. 24.*)

*Since Christ had not yet come, how could the Just of the Old Law be saved?*

Immediately after their sin, God revealed to our first parents that His only-begotten Son would become man and redeem the world. (*Gen. III. 15.*) In the hope of this Redeemer and through His merits, all in the old covenant who participated in His merits by innocence or by penance, and who died in the grace of God, were saved, although they were excluded from heaven until the Ascension of Christ.

*When will the second coming of Christ take place?*

At the end of the world when Christ will come, with great power and majesty, to judge both the living and the dead.

*What is Advent, and why has the Church instituted it?*

Advent is that solemn time, immediately preceding Christmas, instituted by the Church in order that we should, in the first place, meditate on the Incarnation of Christ, the love, patience and humility which He has shown us, and prove our gratitude to Him, because He came from the bosom of His heavenly Father into this valley of tears, to redeem us; secondly, that we may prepare ourselves by sincere repentance, fasting, prayer, alms-deeds, and other works pleasing to God, for the coming of Christ and His birth in our hearts, and thus participate in the graces which He has obtained for us; finally, that He may be merciful to us, when He shall come again as judge of the world. "Watch ye, for ye know not at what hour your Lord will come". (*Matt. XXIV. 42.*) "Wherefore be you also ready; because at what hour you know not, the Son of man will come". (*Matt. XXIV. 44.*)

*How was Advent formerly observed?*

Very differently from now. It then commenced with the feast of St. Martin, and was observed by the faithful like the Forty Days' Fast, with strict penance and devotional exercises, as even now the most of the religious communities do to the present day. The Church has forbidden all turbulent amusements, weddings, dancing and concerts, during Advent. Pope Sylverius ordered that those who



seldom receive Holy Communion should, at least, do so on every Sunday in Advent.

*How should this solemn time be spent by Christians?*

They should recall, during these four weeks, the four thousand years in which the Just under the Old Law expected and desired the promised Redeemer, think of those days of darkness in which nearly all nations were blinded by satan and drawn into the most horrible crimes, then consider their own sins and evil deeds and purify their souls from them by a worthy reception of the Sacraments, so that our Lord may come with His grace to dwell in their hearts and be merciful to them in life and in death. Further, to awaken in the faithful the feelings of repentance so necessary for the reception of the Saviour in their hearts, the Church orders that besides the observance of certain fast-days, the altar shall be draped in violet, that Mass shall be celebrated in violet vestments, that the organ shall be silent and no Gloria sung. Unjust to themselves, disobedient to the Church, and ungrateful, indeed, to God are those Christians who spend this solemn time of grace in sinful amusements without performing any good works, with no longing for Christ's Advent into their hearts.

*What are Rorate High Masses, and why are they celebrated?*

They are the solemn high Masses celebrated in some countries in commemoration of the tidings brought to the Blessed Virgin by the Archangel Gabriel, announcing to her that she was to become the Mother of God; they derive their name from the words of the Introit in the Votive Mass, "Rorate coeli desuper." They are celebrated very early in the morning because the Blessed Virgin preceded our Lord, as the aurora precedes the rising sun.

PRAYER IN ADVENT. O God, who by Thy gracious Advent hast brought joy into this world, grant us, we beseech Thee, Thy grace to prepare ourselves by sincere penance for its celebration and for the Last Judgment. Amen.

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## FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

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THE first Sunday in Advent is the first day of the Ecclesiastical Year, and the beginning of the holy season of Advent. The Church commences, on this day, to contemplate the coming of the Redeemer, and with the prophets to long for Him; during the entire season of Advent she unites her prayers with their sighs, in order to awaken in her children also the desire for the grace of the Redeemer; above all to move them to true penance for their sins, because these are the greatest obstacles in the path of that gracious Advent; therefore she prays at the Introit of the day's Mass: "To Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul: in Thee, O my God, I put my trust; let me not be ashamed: neither let my enemies laugh at me: for none of them that wait on Thee shall be confounded. Show me, O Lord, Thy ways, and teach me Thy paths." (*Ps. XXIV.*)

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Raise up, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy power, and come; that by Thy protection we may deserve to be rescued from the threatening dangers of our sins, and to be saved by Thy deliverance.

EPISTLE. (*Rom. XIII. 11—14.*) BRETHREN, knowing the time, that it is now the hour for us to rise from sleep: for now our salvation is nearer than when we believed. The night is past, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day: not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and strife; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.

*What does St. Paul teach us in this epistle?*

After fully explaining the duties of a Christian life to the Romans who were converted mainly by St. Peter, he



exhorts them to hesitate no longer to fulfil these duties, and he seeks to move their hearts by this time of grace, presented them by the Christian dispensation, and by the shortness of the time of grace.

*What is here meant by sleep?*

The stupidity and blindness of the soul that, forgetting her God, is sunk in a lukewarm, effeminate, slothful and lustful life, which, when it is gone, leaves nothing more than a dream.

*Why does St. Paul say, "salvation is nearer?"*

He wishes to impress upon the Romans that they now have far greater hope of salvation than when they first became Christians, and that they should secure it by a pious life, because death, and the moment on which depended their salvation, or eternal reward, was drawing near. "What is our life," says St. Chrysostom, "other than a course, a dangerous course to death, through death to immortality?"

*What is the signification of day and night?*

The night signifies the time before Christ, a night of darkness, of infidelity and of injustice; the day represents the present time, in which by the gospel Christ enlightens the whole world with the teachings of the true faith.

*What are "the works of darkness?"*

All sins, and especially those which are committed in the dark, to shun the eye of God and man.

*What is the "armor of light?"*

That faith, virtue and grace, the spiritual armor, with which we battle against our three enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil, and in which armor we should walk honestly before all men. A Christian who in baptism has renounced the devil and all his pomps, must not live in vice, but must put on Christ Jesus, that is, must by the imitation of Christ's virtues adorn his soul, as it were, with a beautiful garment. This text (*verse 13*) moved St. Augustine to fly from all works of uncleanness in which he had been involved, and to lead a pure life which he had before thought difficult.

ASPIRATION. Grant, O Lord, that we may rise by penance from the sleep of our sins, may walk in



the light of Thy grace by the performance of good works, may put on Thee and adorn our souls with the imitation of Thy virtues. Amen.



GOSPEL. (*Luke, XXI. 25—33.*) At that time, Jesus said to his disciples: There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars: and upon the earth distress of nations, by reason of the confusion of the roaring of the sea and of the waves, men withering away for fear and expectation of what shall come upon the whole world. For the powers of heaven shall be moved;



and then they shall see the Son of man coming in a cloud with great power and majesty. But when these things begin to come to pass, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is at hand. And he spoke to them a similitude: See the fig-tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth their fruit, you know that summer is nigh. So you also, when you shall see these things come to pass, know that the kingdom of God is at hand. Amen I say to you, this generation shall not pass away till all things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

*Why does the Church cause the gospel of the Last Judgment to be read on this day?*

To move us to penance, and to induce us to prepare our souls for the coming of Christ, by placing the Last Judgment before our minds. Should not the thought of this terrible Judgment, when all good and all evil will be revealed, and accordingly be rewarded or punished in the presence of the whole world—should not this thought strengthen us in virtue!

*What signs will precede the Last Judgment?*

The sun will be obscured, the stars will lose their light and disappear in the firmament, (*Isai. XIII. 10.*) lightning and flames will surround the earth, and wither up every thing; the powers of heaven will be moved, the elements brought to confusion; the roaring of the sea with the howling of the winds and the beating of the storms will fill man with terror and dread. Such evil and distress will come upon the world, that man will wither away for fear, not knowing whither to turn. Then will appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, the holy cross, the terror of the sinners who have scorned it, the consolation of the just who have loved it. (*Matt. XXIV. 30.*)

*Why will all this come to pass?*

Because as the people love the creatures of God so inordinately, more than the Creator, and use them only to His dishonor, He will destroy them in this terrible manner, arming all creatures for vengeance against His enemies,

(*Wisdom V. 8—24.*) and showing by the manner of their destruction the evils which will fall upon all sinners. The darkness of the sun will indicate the darkness of hell; the blood-red moon, the anger and wrath of God; the disappearance and falling of the stars, will represent the fall of sinners into the abyss of hell and their disappearance from earth; and the madness of the elements, will exhibit the rage of the beasts of hell. Sinners will then vainly, and too late, repent that they have attached their hearts to things which will end so horribly, and that only increase their torments.

*Why does Christ nevertheless command: "Lift up your heads, for your redemption is at hand?"*

These words are spoken to the just who as long as they live on earth are like prisoners and exiles, but who at the Last Judgment will be taken body and soul into their long desired fatherland, the kingdom of heaven: into the freedom of the children of God. These will have reason to raise their heads, now bowed in mourning, and to rejoice.

*How will the Last Judgment commence?*

By the command of God the angels will sound the trumpets, summoning all men from the four parts of the earth to come to judgment. (*I. Thess. IV. 15.*) Then the bodies of the dead will unite with their souls, and be brought to the valley of Josaphat, and there placed, the just on the right, the wicked on the left. (*Matt. XXV. 33.*) Then the devils as well as the angels will appear; Christ Himself will be seen coming in a cloud, in such power and majesty that the sinners will be filled with terror. They will not dare to look at Him, and will cry to the mountains to fall upon them, and to the hills to cover them. (*Luke XXIII. 30.*)

*How will the judgment be held?*

The book of conscience, upon which all men are to be judged, and which closed with this life, will be opened. All good and evil thoughts, words, deeds and motives, even the most secret, known only to God, will then be as plainly revealed to the whole world as if they were written on each one's forehead; by these each one will be judged, and be eternally rewarded, or eternally punished.

O God! If we must then give an account of every idle word, (*Matt. XII. 36*) how can we stand in the face of so many sinful words and actions!



*Why will God hold a universal public judgment?*

Although immediately after death, a special private judgment of each soul takes place, God has ordained a public and universal judgment for the following reasons: First, that it may be clearly shown to all how just has been His private judgment, and also that the body which has been the instrument of sin or of virtue may share in the soul's punishment or reward; secondly, that the justice which they could by no means obtain in this life, may be rendered before the whole world to the oppressed poor, and to persecuted innocence, and that the wicked who have abused the righteous, and yet have been considered honest and good, may be put to shame before all; thirdly, that the graces and means of salvation bestowed upon each, may be made known; fourthly, that the blessed providence of God which often permitted the righteous to suffer evil while the wicked prospered, may be vindicated, and it be shown on that day that His acts are acts of the greatest wisdom; fifthly, that the wicked may learn the goodness of God, not for their comfort or benefit, but for their greater sorrow, that they may see how He rewards even the slightest work performed for His love and honor; finally, that Christ may be exalted before the wicked on earth as before the good in heaven, and that the truth of His words may solemnly be made manifest.

ASPIRATION. Just art Thou O God, and just are Thy judgments. Ah, penetrate my soul with holy fear of them, that I may be kept always in awe, and avoid sin. Would that I could say with the penitent St. Jerome: "Whether I eat or drink, or whatever I do, I seem to hear the awful sound of the trumpet in my ears: 'Arise ye dead, and come to judgment'."

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## SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.



**I**N this day the Church not only makes mention in the office of the priest, but also in the Mass, of the two different Advents of Christ, that by His first gracious advent we may be gladdened, and by His last terrible coming at the day of judgment we may be impressed with salutary fear.

With this intention she cries out at the Introit: People of **Sion**, behold the Lord shall come to save the nations; and the Lord shall make the glory of his voice to be heard in the joy of your heart. (*Isai. XXX. 30.*) Give ear, O thou that rulest Israel: thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep. (*Ps. LXXIX.*) Glory etc.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to prepare the ways of Thine only-begotten Son: that through His advent we may be worthy to serve Thee with purified minds; who livest and reignest with God the Father, in union with the Holy Ghost, God for ever and ever. *Amen.*

**EPISTLE.** (*Romans XV. 4—13.*) **BRETHREN**, what things soever were written, were written for our learning, that through patience and the comfort of the scriptures, we might have hope. Now the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of one mind one towards another, according to Jesus Christ: that with one mind, and with one mouth, you may glorify God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive one another, as Christ also hath received you unto the honor of God. For I say that Christ Jesus was minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers. But that the Gentiles are to glorify God for his mercy, as it is written: Therefore will I confess to thee, O Lord, among the Gentiles, and will sing to thy name. And again he saith: Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. And again: Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles, and magnify him, all ye



people. And again, Isaias saith: There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise up to rule the Gentiles, in him the Gentiles shall hope. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, and in the power of the Holy Ghost.

*What does St. Paul teach in this Epistle?*

The Jews and Gentiles who had been converted to the Christian faith were disputing among themselves at Rome, in regard to abstinence and the use of certain kinds of food, reproaching each other severely; the Jews boasted that the Saviour, according to promise, was born of their nation, thus claiming Him from the Gentiles, who, in their turn, reproached the Jews for their ingratitude in having crucified Him. To restore harmony St. Paul shows that each had reason, the Jews and Gentiles alike, to praise God, to whose grace and goodness they owed all; that each had in Him a Redeemer in whom they could hope for salvation; and he warns them not to deprive themselves of that hope by contentions. By these words the Apostle also teaches that we too, have great reason to praise God, and to thank Him for calling us, whose forefathers were heathens, to the Christian faith, and to guard against losing our salvation by pride, envy, impurity &c.

*Why should we read the Scriptures?*

That we may know what we are to believe, and do in order to be saved, as all Scripture inspired by God is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice; (*Tim. III. 16.*) that we may learn from what Christ has done for us, and the saints for Christ, to be patient in our sufferings, and to be consoled and encouraged by their example. To derive this benefit from the Scriptures, the Catholic must read them by the light of that Spirit through whose assistance they came into existence, who lives and remains for ever with the Church: that is, the light of the Holy Ghost must be sought, that their meaning may be read according to the sense of the Church and not be explained according to the reader's judgment. For he who reads the holy Scriptures by the light of his own private judgment, must, as experience shows, of necessity diverge from the right path, become entangled in manifold doubts, and at last, lose the faith entirely. For this reason the Catholic Church has very properly limited the reading of the Bible, not as has been falsely asserted, uncondition-



ally forbidden it, but she allows the reading of those editions only, which are accompanied by notes and explanations, that the unity of faith may not be disturbed, and that among Catholics there may not be the terrible bewilderment of the human intellect which has taken place among the different heretical sects who have even declared murder, bigamy and impurity to be permissible on the authority of the Bible. — We are to consider also, that Christ never commanded the Bible to be written or read, and that not the readers but the hearers and the followers of the word of God by which is meant those who hear the word of God in sermons, and keep it, will be saved.\*

*Why is God called a God of patience, of consolation, and of hope?*

He is called a God of patience because He awaits our repentance, of consolation, because He gives us grace to be patient in crosses and afflictions, and so consoles us inwardly, that we become not faint-hearted; of hope, because He gives us the virtue of hope, and because He desires to be Himself the reward we are to expect after this life.

ASPIRATION. O God of patience, of consolation and of hope, fill our hearts with peace and joy, and grant that we may become perfect in all good, and by faith, hope and charity, attain the promised salvation.

GOSPEL. (*Matt. XI. 2—10.*) At that time, when John had heard in prison the works of Christ, sending two of his disciples, he said to him: Art thou he that art to come, or do we look for another? And Jesus making answer, said to them: Go and relate to John what you have heard and seen. The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, the poor have the gospel preached to them: and blessed is he that shall not be scandalized in me. And when they went their way, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John, What went you out into the desert to see? a reed shaken with the wind? But what went you out to see? a man clothed in soft

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\* Further instruction in regard to the doctrine of faith on this subject will be found in the "Instruction for Easter-Tuesday."





garments? Behold, they that are clothed in soft garments are in the houses of kings. But what went you out to see? a prophet? yea I tell you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my Angel before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee.

*Why was John in prison?*

He was in prison, and lost his life, because he had rebuked king Herod for his adulterous marriage with his brother's wife. (*Matt. XIV. 3—10.*) Truth, as the proverb says, is certainly a very beautiful mother, but she usually



bears a very ugly daughter: Hatred. St. John experienced, that speaking the truth very often arouses hatred and enmity against the speaker. — Let us learn from him to speak the truth always, when duty requires it, even if it brings upon us the greatest misfortunes, for, if with St. John we patiently bear persecution, with St. John we shall become martyrs for truth.

*Why did St. John send his disciples to Christ?*

That they should learn from Christ, who had become illustrious by His teachings and miracles, that He was really the promised Messiah, the Saviour of the world, whom they should follow.

*Why did Christ say to the disciples of St. John: "Go and say to John, the blind see, the lame walk &c.?"*

That they should, by His miracles, judge Him to be the Messiah, because the prophets had predicted that He would work such miracles. (*Isai. XXXV. 5—6.*) "Christ," says St. Cyril, "proved that He was the Messiah by the grandeur as well as by the number of His miracles."

*Why does Christ add: "And blessed is he who shall not be scandalized in me?"*

Christ used these words in reference to those who would be scandalized by His poverty, humility and ignominious death on the cross, and who for these reasons would doubt and despise Him, and cast Him away; though "man," as St. Gregory says, "owes all the more love to the Lord, his God, the more humiliations He has borne for him."

*What was our Lord's object in the questions He asked concerning St. John?*

His object was to remove from St. John all suspicion of failing in faith in Him; and to praise the perseverance with which, although imprisoned and threatened with death, he continued to fill his office of preacher, thus constituting him an example to all preachers, confessors and superiors, that they may never be deterred by human respect, or fear of man, or other temporal considerations, from courageously fulfilling their duties. Our Lord commended also rigorous penance, exhibited by St. John's coarse garments and simple food, that we may learn, from his example, penance and mortification.



*Why does Christ say that John is "more than a prophet?"*

Because St. John was foretold by the prophet Malachias as was no other prophet; because of all the prophets he was the only one who with his own eyes saw Christ and could point Him out, and was the one to baptize Him: and because like an angel, a messenger of God, he announced the coming of the Saviour, and prepared the way for the Lord.

*How did St. John prepare the way for the Saviour?*

By his sermons on penance, and by his own penitential life he endeavored to move the hearts of the Jews, that by amending their lives, they might prepare to receive the grace of the Messiah, for God will not come with His grace into our hearts if we do not prepare His way by true repentance.

ASPIRATION. O Lord Jesus, by the praise Thou didst accord to Thy forerunner St. John, for his firmness and austerities, inflame our hearts with love to imitate his steadfastness and penance, that we may never do anything to please man which may be displeasing to Thee; grant us also Thy grace that we too, like St. John, may have those who are confided to our care, instructed in the Christian doctrine.

#### CONSOLATION IN SUFFERING.

*"The God of patience and of comfort, the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing". (Rom. XV. 5, 13.)*

*What gives us the greatest consolation in adversities?*

**T**HE strong and fervent belief that each and every thing that happens to us, comes to us for our own good from God, and that whatever evil befalls us, is by the will or permission of God. Good things and evil, life and death, poverty and riches, are from God. (*Ecclus. XI. 14.*) If we have received good things at the hand of God, (*Job. II. 10.*) saith the pious Job in his affliction, "why should we not receive evil?"

We should be of the fully convinced that without the permission of God not a single hair of our head shall perish, (*Luke XXI. 18.*) much less can any other evil be done to us by man or devil; (*Job. I.*) we should have a steadfast



confidence that if we ask Him, God can and will assist us in our sufferings, if it be for our salvation. Can a woman forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? And if she should forget, yet will not I forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee in my hands; (*Isai. XLIX. 15, 16.*) we should hope for abundant reward in the future life, which we will merit by patience in our sufferings, for that which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; (*II. Cor. IV. 17.*) we should remember that all complaints and murmurs against the dispensation of God are useless, and lead only to harm and shame; Who hath resisted Him, and hath had peace? (*Job. IX. 4.*) we should have a vivid remembrance of our sins, for which we have long since deserved the eternal punishments of hell, — hence the well known saying of St. Augustine: O Lord, here cut, here burn, but spare me in eternity. No other way leads to the kingdom of heaven than the way of the cross, which Christ Himself, His sorrowing mother, and all the saints had to tread. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into His glory? (*Luke XXIV. 26.*) Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God. (*Acts XIV. 21.*) And we should not forget that sorrows and adversities are signs of God's love, and manifest proofs of being His chosen ones. Whom the Lord loveth He chastiseth, and He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. (*Heb. XII. 6. comp. 7—11.*)

PRAYER IN SORROW. O almighty, kind and merciful God! who hast said: "Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me", (*Ps. XLIX. 15.*) behold relying upon Thy word, I take refuge in Thee in my trouble. Give honor to Thy name, therefore, and deliver me, if it be pleasing to Thee and beneficial for me, that all may know, Thou art our only help. Amen.





## THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

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IN this Sunday again, the Church calls on us to rejoice in the Advent of the Redeemer, and at the Introit sings: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Let your modesty be known to all men: for the Lord is nigh. Be nothing solicitous; but in every thing by prayer let your requests be made known to God. (*Phil. IV.*) Lord, thou hast blessed thy land; thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob. (*Ps. LXXXIV.*)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Incline Thine ear, O Lord, we beseech Thee, unto our prayers: and enlighten the darkness of our mind by The grace of thy visitation.

EPISTLE. (*Phil. IV. 4—7.*) BRETHREN, rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Let your modesty be known to all men. The Lord is nigh. Be nothing solicitous; but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your petitions be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasseth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*What is meant by "rejoicing in the Lord?"*

By "rejoicing in the Lord" is meant rejoicing in the grace of the true faith we have received, in the hope of obtaining eternal happiness; rejoicing in the protection of the most High under which we stand; and in the persecution for justice's sake in which Christ Himself exhorts us to rejoice, and in which the Apostle Paul gloried. (*II. Cor. VII. 4.*)

*What else does St. Paul teach in this epistle?*

He exhorts us to give all a good example by a modest and edifying life, to which we should be directed by the remembrance of God's presence and His coming to judgment; (*Chrysostom. 33, in Joann.*) he warns us against solicitude about temporal affairs, advising us to cast our care on God, who will never abandon us in our needs, if we entreat Him with confidence and humility.



*In what does "the peace of God" consist?*

It consists in a good conscience, (*Ambrose*) in which St. Paul gloried and rejoiced beyond measure. (*II. Cor. I. 12.*) This peace of the soul sustained all the martyrs, and consoled many others who suffered for justice's sake. Thus St. Tibertius said to the tyrant: "We count all pain as naught, for our conscience is at peace." There cannot be imagined a greater joy than that which proceeds from the peace of a good conscience. It must be experienced to be understood.

ASPIRATION. The peace of God, that surpasseth all understanding, preserve our hearts in Christ Jesus. Amen.

## COMFORT AND RELIEF IN SORROW.

*"Is any one troubled, let him pray." (James. V. 13.)*  
**T**HERE is no greater or more powerful comfort in sorrow than in humble and confiding prayer, to complain to God of our wants and cares, as did the sorrowful Anna, mother of the prophet Samuel, (*I. Kings X.*) and the chaste Susanna when she was falsely accused of adultery and sentenced to death. (*Dan. XIII. 35.*) So the pious King Ezechias complained in prayer of the severe oppression with which he was threatened by Senacherib. (*IV. Kings XIX. 14.*) So also King Josaphat made his trouble known to God only, saying: But as we know not what to do, we can only turn our eyes on Thee. (*II. Paralip. XX. 12.*) They all received aid and comfort from God. Are you sad and in trouble? Lift up your soul with David and say: To Thee I have lifted up my eyes, who dwellest in heaven. Behold as the eyes of servants are on the hands of their masters, as the eyes of the handmaid are on the hands of her mistress: so are our eyes unto the Lord our God, until He shall have mercy on us. (*Psalms. CXXII. 1—3.*) Give joy to the soul of Thy servant, for to Thee, O Lord, I have lifted up my soul. (*Psalms. LXXXV. 4.*)

GOSPEL. (*John I. 19—28.*) At that time the Jews sent from Jerusalem priests and Levites to John, to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and did not deny; and he confessed: I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he said: I am not. Art thou the prophet? And he answered, No. They said therefore unto him, Who art





thou, that we may give an answer to them that sent us? what sayst thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaias. And they that were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said to him: Why then dost thou baptize, if thou be not Christ, nor Elias, nor the prophet? John answered them, saying: I baptize with water: but there hath stood one in the midst of you, whom you know not: the same is he that shall come after



me, who is preferred before me, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to loose. These things were done in Bethania beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

*Why did the Jews send messengers to St. John to ask him who he was?*

Partly because of their curiosity, when they saw St. John leading such a pure, angelic and penitential life; partly, as St. Chrysostom says, out of envy, because St. John preached with such spiritual force, baptized and exhorted the people to penance, that the inhabitants of Jerusalem came to him in great numbers; partly, and principally, they were impelled by the providence of God to demand publicly of St. John, if he were the Messiah, and thus be directed to Christ, that they might be compelled to acknowledge Him as the Messiah, or have no excuse for rejecting Him.

*Why did the Jews ask St. John, if he were not Elias or the prophet?*

The Jews falsely believed that the Redeemer was to come into this world but once, then with great glory, and that Elias or one of the old prophets would come before Him, to prepare His way, as (*Malachias IV. 5.*) had prophesied of St. John; so when St. John said of himself that he was not the Messiah, they asked him, if he were not then Elias or one of the prophets. But Elias, who was taken alive from this world in a fiery chariot, will not reappear until just before the second coming of Christ.

*Why did St. John say, he was not Elias or the Prophet?*

Because he was not Elias, and, in reality, not a prophet in the Jewish sense of the word, but more than a prophet, because he announced that Christ had come, and pointed Him out.

*Why does St. John call himself "the voice of one crying in the wilderness?"*

Because in his humility, he desired to acknowledge that he was only an instrument through which the Redeemer announced to the abandoned and hopeless Jews the consolation of the Messiah, exhorting them to bear worthy fruits of penance.

*How do we bear worthy fruits of penance?*

We bear fruits of penance, when after our conversion, we serve God and justice with the same zeal with which



we previously served the devil and iniquity; when we love God as fervently as we once loved the flesh, — that is, the desires of the flesh, — and the pleasures of the world; when we give our members to justice as we once gave them to malice and impurity, (*Rom. IV. 19.*) when the mouth that formerly uttered improprieties, when the ears that listened to detraction or evil speech, when the eyes that looked curiously upon improper objects, now rejoice in the utterance of words pleasing to God, to hear and to see things dear to Him; when the appetite that was given to the luxury of eating and drinking, now abstains; when the hands give back what they have stolen; in a word, when we put off the old man, who was corrupted, and put on the new man, who is created in justice and holiness of truth. (*Ephes. IV. 22—24.*)

*What was the baptism administered by St. John, and what were its effects?*

The baptism administered by John was only a baptism of penance for forgiveness of sins. (*Luke III. 3.*) The ignorant Jews not considering the greatness of their transgressions, St. John came exhorting them to acknowledge their sins, and do penance for them; that being converted, and truly contrite, they might seek their Redeemer, and thus obtain remission of their offences. We must then conclude, that St. John's baptism was only a ceremony or initiation, by which the Jews enrolled themselves as his disciples to do penance, as a preparation for the remission of sin by means of the second baptism, viz., of Jesus Christ.

*What else can be learned from this gospel?*

We learn from it to be always sincere, especially at the tribunal of penance, and to practice the necessary virtue of humility, by which, in reply to the questions of the Jews, St. John confessed the truth openly and without reserve, as shown by the words: The latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to loose, as the lowest of Christ's servants, giving us an example of humility and sincerity, which should induce us always to speak the truth, and not only not to seek honor, but to give to God all the honor shown us by man.

Have you not far more reason than John, who was such a great saint, to esteem yourself but little, and to humble yourself before God and man? "My son," says Tobias, (*IV. 14.*) "never suffer pride to reign in thy mind, or in thy words: for from it all perdition took its beginning."



ASPIRATION. O Lord, banish from my heart all envy, jealousy and pride. Grant me instead, to know myself and Thee, that by the knowledge of my nothingness, misery and vices, I may always remain unworthy in my own eyes, and that by the contemplation of Thy infinite perfections, I may seek to prize Thee above all, to love and to glorify Thee, and practice charity towards my neighbor. Amen.

### EMBER WEDNESDAY IN ADVENT.

LESSON. (*Isai. VII. 10—15.*) AND the Lord spoke again to Achaz, saying: Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God, either unto the depth of hell or unto the height above. And Achaz said: I will not ask, and I will not tempt the Lord. And he said: Hear ye, therefore, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to be grievous to men, that you are grievous to my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel. He shall eat butter and honey, that he may know to refuse the evil, and to choose the good\*.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON. In this Lesson is contained the important prophecy of the Saviour's birth from a virgin. War was declared by the kings of Israel and Syria against Achaz, king of Juda, who at their approach was overpowered with fear, and thought of seeking aid from the Assyrians instead of looking to Almighty God for help; and for this lack of confidence in God, the prophet Isaiah was sent to announce to him the destruction of both kings, and his own preservation. The prophet, wishing Achaz to prove his assertion, requested the king to demand a sign from God; but he being given to idolatry, did not wish to ask a sign from heaven, for he had more faith in the assistance of the demons and of the Assyrians. He offended

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\* This lesson is read also on the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin and in the Rorate Masses, as is the gospel (*Luke i. 26—28.*) belonging to this day, which will be found in the second part of this book in the instruction on the Annunciation.



God by his refusal and the prophet rebuked him, saying: The Lord himself will give you (that is, your posterity) a sign, for the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and he shall be called Emmanuel, that is — God with us. By these words Isaias desired to impress upon the king, that as surely as he should be preserved from his enemies, so surely this Emmanuel, the Son of the Virgin, would appear to redeem the world from Satan's power. — Let us learn from this lesson always to trust in God, who can deliver us from all danger, and let us also be grateful to Him, who seven hundred and forty-three years before the time, permitted, for our consolation, the announcement of the coming of His Son, our Saviour.

ASPIRATION. O Emmanuel, powerful, holy God! Our Saviour and our Redeemer! be with us always in life and death: for, if Thou art with us who can be against us?

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that the approaching celebration of our redemption may bring us the necessary graces for the present life, and bestow upon us the rewards of eternal happiness, through our Lord Jesus Christ &c.

#### EMBER FRIDAY IN ADVENT.

LESSON. (*Isai. XI. 1—5.*) AND there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel, and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, and of godliness, and he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge according to the sight of the eyes, nor reprove according to the hearing of the ears. But he shall judge the poor with justice, and shall reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked. And justice shall be the girdle of his loins: and faith the girdle of his reins.



EXPLANATION. In this lesson the Lord announced to the Jews, through the prophet, the consoling promise that when they were sufficiently punished, and had come to the consciousness of their own misery, the Saviour would come and bring all things to order. The rod spoken of by the prophet, is the Blessed Virgin who would proceed from the root of Jesse, that is, from the stem of David, and give birth to the flower, viz., to the Saviour upon whom the Holy Ghost, with His sevenfold gifts, would descend, that is, dwell in Him. As a reader of the heart He would judge man, not according to his outward appearance, but according to his intentions. He would not flatter the sinner, but with severe words punish his sinful life, and because just and faithful, He would reward every man without respect to person.

Let us be always mindful in all our omissions and commissions, that our Lord sees into our hearts, and judges not only according to our works, but principally according to our intentions, and let us strive ever to have pure motives in all our actions.

ASPIRATION. O Fragrant Flower of the Virgin, Jesus our Saviour, come and draw us to Thee, that we may walk in the perfume of Thy ointments, and obtain a merciful judgment from Thee.

\* *The gospel of this day will be found in the second part of this book in the instruction on the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin.*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Show forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy power, and come, that we who confidently trust in Thy love, may be the sooner delivered from all adversities, who livest and reignest &c.

#### EMBER SATURDAY IN ADVENT.

EPISTLE. (ii. *Thess.* ii. 1—8.) BRETHREN, we beseech you, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of our gathering together unto him: that you be not easily moved from your mind, nor be frightened, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle, as sent from us, as if the day of the Lord were at hand. Let



no man deceive you by any means: for unless there come a revolt first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth, and is lifted up above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself as if he were God. Remember you not, that when I was yet with you I told you these things? And now you know what withholdeth, that he may be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity already worketh: only that he who now holdeth, do hold, until he be taken out of the way, and then that wicked one shall be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall kill with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.

EXPLANATION. At the time when St. Paul wrote this epistle, the false report was circulated that the Last Day was at hand, and Christ was coming to judge all men. The Apostle warns the faithful against trusting this, telling them they should not permit themselves to be misled; for first, the greater part of mankind would fall away from God, and Antichrist, the son of perdition appear, but not until the gospel was everywhere preached. The great falling off would be gradual, caused by the heresies which would arise from time to time, and would be completed by Antichrist, whom our Lord, at last, on the Day of Judgment would kill with the breath of his mouth.

Let us learn from this epistle not to be curious concerning the Last Day, and the Advent of Christ, but to prepare, rather for the coming of Jesus into our hearts, that He may be merciful to us in death, and at judgment.

ASPIRATION. Ah, Jesus! when wilt Thou come and take my heart wholly into Thy possession, that I may be forever Thine!

Remark. *The gospel of this day will be found in the instruction on the Fourth Sunday of Advent.*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who seest us afflicted on account of our own wickedness; mercifully grant, that by Thy coming we may be comforted. Who livest and reignest &c.



## FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.



IN this Sunday the Church redoubles her ardent sighs for the coming of the Redeemer, and, in the Introit, places the longing of the just of the Old Law upon the lips of the faithful, again exhorting them through the gospel of the day, to true penance as the best preparation for the worthy reception of the Saviour. Therefore at the Introit she prays: Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the Just. (*Isai. xlv.*) Let the earth be opened, and bud forth a Saviour. The heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of his hands. (*Ps. xviii. 2.*)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Raise up, O Lord, we pray Thee, Thy power, and come, and with great might succor us: that, by the help of Thy grace, that which our sins impede may be hastened by Thy merciful forgiveness. Who livest, etc.

EPISTLE. (*i Cor. iv. 1—5.*) BRETHREN, Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God. Here now it is required among the dispensers, that a man be found faithful. But to me, it is a very small thing to be judged by you, or by man's day: but neither do I judge my own self. For I am not conscious to myself of anything, yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge not before the time, until the Lord come: who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise from God.

*Why is this epistle read on this day?*

The Church desires by this epistle to impress those who received Holy Orders on Ember Saturday with the dignity of their office, and exhorts them to fill it with becoming fidelity and sanctity, excelling the laity in piety and virtue, as well as in official dignity. She wishes again to remind



the faithful of the terrible coming of Christ to judgment, urging them, by purifying their conscience through a contrite confession, to receive Christ at this holy Christmas time, as their Saviour, that they may not behold Him, at the Last Day, as their severe judge.

*How should the faithful regard the priests and spiritual superiors?*

They should esteem and obey them as servants, stewards, and vicars of Christ; as dispensers of the holy mysteries; (i *Cor.* iv. 1.) as ambassadors of the most High. (ii *Cor.* v. 20.) For this reason God earnestly commands honor to priests, (*Ecclus.* vii. 31.) and Christ says of the Apostles and their successors: (*Luke* x. 16.) Who despiseth you, despiseth me; and St. Paul writes: (i *Tim.* v. 17.) Let the priests that rule well be esteemed worthy of double honor: especially they who labor in the word and doctrine.

*Can the priest dispense the sacraments according to his own will?*

No, he must have power from the Church, and must exercise his office faithfully, in accordance with the orders of the Church, and act according to the will of Christ whose steward he is. The priest dare not give that which is holy to dogs, (*Matt.* vii. 6.) that is, he is not permitted to give absolution, and administer the sacraments to impenitent persons, under penalty of incurring eternal damnation.

*Why does St. Paul consider the judgment of men a small matter?*

Because it is usually false, deceptive, foolish, and is consequently not worth seeking or caring for. Man often counts as evil that which is in itself good and, on the contrary, esteems as good that which is evil. St. Paul says: If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. (*Gal.* i. 10.) Oh, how foolish, and what poor Christians, therefore, are they, who not to displease man, willingly adopt all silly customs, and fashions in dress, manners and appearance, making themselves contemptible to God, the angels, and saints. Recall the beautiful words of the Seraphic St. Francis: "We are, what we are in the sight of God, nothing more"; learn from them to fulfil your duties faithfully, and be indifferent to the judgment of the world and its praise.



*Why does not St. Paul wish to judge himself?*

Because no one, without a special revelation from heaven, can know if he be just in the sight of God or not, even though his conscience may accuse him of nothing, for "man knoweth not whether he be worthy of love or hatred." (*Eccl.* ix. 1.) Thus St. Paul goes on to say, that though he was not conscious of any wrong, he did not judge himself to be justified, God only could decide that. Man should certainly examine himself as much as is in his power, to find if he has anything within him displeasing to God; should he find nothing he must not judge himself more just than others, but consider that the eyes of his mind may be dimmed, and fail to see that which God sees and will reveal to others at the Judgment Day. The Pharisees saw no fault in themselves, and were saintly and perfect in their own estimation, yet our Lord cursed them.

ASPIRATION. "O Lord, enter not into judgment with Thy servant: for in Thy sight no man living can be justified". (*Ps.* cxlii. 2.)

GOSPEL. (*Luke* iii. 1—6.) In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and Philip his brother tetrarch of Iturea and the country of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilina, under the high-priests Annas and Caiphas: the word of the Lord came to John the son of Zachary in the desert. And he came into all the country about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of penance for the remission of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of Isaias the prophet: A voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low: the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways plain: and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

*Why is the time in which St. John commenced to preach so minutely described?*

The Evangelist, contrary to his usual custom, describes the time minutely, and enumerates exactly, in their precise





order, the religious and civil princes' in office, that, in the first place, it could not be denied that this was truly the time and the year in which the promised Messiah appeared in this world, whom John baptized, and the Heavenly Father declared to be His beloved Son. Furthermore, it shows the fulfilment of the prophecy of the Patriarch Jacob, (*Gen. xlix. 10.*) that when the sceptre would be taken away from Juda, that is, when the Jews would have no longer a king from their own tribes, the Saviour would come.

*What is meant by: "The word of the Lord came to John?"*

It means that John was commissioned by divine inspiration, or by an angel sent from God, to preach penance



and announce to the world the coming of the Lord. He had prepared himself for this work by a penitential, secluded life, and intercourse with God. We learn from his example not to intrude ourselves into office, least of all into a spiritual office, but to await the call from God, preparing ourselves in solitude and quiet, by fervent prayer and by a holy life, for the necessary light.

*What is meant by: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight his paths?"*

It means that we should prepare our hearts for the worthy reception of Christ, by penance, amendment, and the resolution to lead a pious life in future. To do this, every valley should be filled, that is, all faint-heartedness, sloth and cowardice, all wordly carnal sentiments should be elevated and directed to God, the highest Good, by firm confidence and ardent desire for heavenly virtues; the mountains and hills should be brought low, that is, pride, stubbornness, and ambition should be humbled, and the obstinate will be broken. The crooked shall be made straight, that is, ill-gotten goods should be restored, hypocrisy, malice, and double dealing be renounced, and our intentions turned to God and the performance of His holy will. And the rough ways shall be made plain, that is, anger, revenge, and impatience must leave the heart, if the Lamb of God is to dwell therein. It may also signify that the Saviour put to shame the pride of the world, and its false wisdom, by building His Church upon the Apostles, who, by reason of their poverty and simplicity, may be considered the low valleys, while the way to heaven, formerly so rough and hard to tread, because of the want of grace, is now by His grace made smooth and easy.

ASPIRATION. O my Jesus! would that my heart were well prepared and smooth for Thee! Assist me! O my Saviour to do that which I cannot do by myself. Make me an humble valley, fill me with Thy grace; turn my crooked and perverted will to Thy pleasure; change my rough and angry disposition, throw away in me whatever impedes Thy way, that Thou mayst come to me without hinderance. Thou alone possess and rule me forever. Amen.



## INSTRUCTION ON THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

*"Preaching the baptism of penance for the remission of sins."  
(Luke III. 3.)*

*What is penance, and how many kinds are there?*

**P**ENANCE, says the Roman Catechism, (*Cat. Rom. de Pœnit. 54.*) consists in the turning of our whole soul to God, hating and detesting the crimes we have committed, firmly resolving to amend our lives, its evil habits and corrupt ways, hoping through the mercy of God to obtain pardon. This is interior penance, or the virtue of penance. The sincere acknowledgment of our sins to a priest and the absolution he accords, is exterior penance, or the holy Sacrament of Penance, which Christ instituted, (*John XX. 22—23.*) through which the sins committed after baptism, are remitted.

*Which of these penances is necessary for the forgiveness of sins?*

Both are necessary, for unless the conversion of the heart to God, a true consciousness of, and sorrow for sin, the firm purpose of amendment and confidence in God's mercy, precede the confession, declaring all our sins to a priest can not obtain forgiveness of mortal sin, committed after baptism. At the same time a really contrite turning to God, will not, without confession to a priest, obtain forgiveness, except when by circumstances, a person is prevented from approaching the tribunal of penance. Such a person must, however, have the ardent desire to confess as soon as possible.

*Can any one who has committed mortal sin be saved without penance?*

No, for penance is as necessary to such a one as baptism, if he wishes not to perish: Unless you do penance, says Christ, you shall all likewise perish. (*Luke XIII. 3. 5.*)

*Is this penance performed at once?*

This penance is necessary every day of our lives: that is, we must from day to day endeavor to be heartily sorry for our sins, to despise them, to eradicate the roots of sin, that is, our passions and evil inclinations, and become more pleasing to God by penance and good works.



*Why do so many die impenitent?*

Because they do not accept and use the many graces God offers them, but put off their repentance. If such sinners, like the godless King Antiochus, (ii. *Mach.* ix.) intend to repent on their death-bed for fear of punishment, they usually find that God in His justice will no longer give them the grace of repentance, for he who when he can repent, will not, cannot when he will. "Who will not listen at the time of grace", says St. Gregory, "will not be listened to in the time of anxiety." And it is to be feared that he who postpones penance until old age, will not find justice where he looked for mercy.

*Can all sinners do penance?*

With the grace of God all can, even the greatest sinners; as a real father God calls them when He says: As I live . . . I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways: and why will ye die, O house of Israel? And the wickedness of the wicked shall not hurt him, in what day soever he shall turn from his wickedness. (*Ezech.* xxxiii. 11. 12.)

*Do all who go to confession perform true penance?*

Unfortunately they do not; for all is not accomplished with confession. If there is no sincere detestation of sin, no true sorrow for having offended God; if the evil inclinations and bad habits are not overcome, ill-gotten goods restored, and calumny repaired, the occasions of sin avoided; if a sincere amendment of life, or, at least, its earnest purpose does not follow, then indeed, there cannot be the least shadow of true repentance, not even though such persons confess weekly. But alas! we see many such. And why? Because many think repentance consists simply in confession, and not in the amendment of their lives. Only those obtain pardon who are truly penitent, and perform all that is enjoined upon them in confession. It is well, therefore, to read and carefully act according to the following instructions.

## I. ON THE EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE.

The foundation of true repentance, interior and exterior (see the preceding pages), is the vivid knowledge of our sins. There are many who are unconscious of the most grievous sins in which they are buried; blinded by self-love they do not even regard them as sins, do not confess them, perform



no penance for them and are consequently eternally lost. To prevent this great evil, the Council of Trent (*Sess. 14. c. 5.*) ordered a careful examination of conscience before confession, and afterwards to confess the sins which are discovered by that examination.

*Why should we examine our conscience?*

Because, as St. Ignatius says, no one can become fully aware of his own faults, unless God reveals them by a special light; we should, therefore, first of all, daily ask the Holy Ghost to enlighten us, and should then examine our thoughts, desires, words, actions, and omissions since our last valid confession and how often we have sinned in these respects. To know this, we should let our conscience, that is, the inner voice which tells us what is good and what is evil, speak freely, without flattering ourselves, or passing it by negligently. St. Charles Borromeo says, we should place before our eyes the Ten Commandments of God and carefully compare our life and our morals with them; it is well also to examine ourselves on the seven deadly sins, and remember the places and persons with whom we have been in contact, the duties of our state of life, the vices to which we are most inclined, the consequences that were, or might have been produced upon ourselves or others. At the same time, we should imagine ourselves standing before the judgment-seat of God, and whatever would cause us fear there, whatever we could not answer for there, we should look upon as sins, be sorry for, and confess.

*Is it a sin not to examine ourselves long and carefully?*

Certainly it is a sin for those to examine their consciences carelessly, who live unfaithfully and in mortal sin, and who seldom confess, because they expose themselves frivolously to the danger of leaving out great sins, and consequently they make a sacrilegious confession, committing thereby a new and grievous sin.

Those who daily ask God for enlightenment and examine their conscience at least every evening before going to bed, will prepare themselves properly before approaching the tribunal of penance. "Behold, you have a book in which you write your daily expenses," says St. Chrysostom, "make a book of your conscience, also, and write there your daily sins. Before you go to bed, before sleep comes, take your book, that is, your conscience, and recall your sins, whether of thought, word, or deed. Say then to your soul: Again, O my soul, a day is spent, what have we done



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of evil or of good? If you have accomplished some good, be grateful to God; if evil, resolve to avoid it for the future. Shed tears in remembrance of your sins; ask forgiveness of God, and then let your body sleep."

### II. ON CONTRITION.

"O man", cries St. Augustine, "why dost thou weep over the body whence the soul has departed, and not over the soul from which God has withdrawn?" The idolatrous Michas (*Judges* xviii. 23. 24.) complained bitterly, because his idols were taken from him; Esau grieved greatly over the loss of his birthright and his father's blessing. (*Gen.* xxvii. 34.) Should we not therefore, be filled with sorrow, when by our sins we have lost God and Heaven?

*What is contrition, and how many kinds are there?*

"Contrition is a hearty sorrow and detestation of our sins, with a firm purpose of sinning no more." (*Conc. Trid. sess. xiv. 4.*) If this grief and detestation comes from a temporal injury, shame or punishment, it is a natural sorrow; but if we are sorry for our sins, because by them we have offended God, and transgressed His holy law, it is a supernatural sorrow; this, again, is imperfect when fear of God's punishment is the motive; it is perfect, if we are sorry for our sins, because we have offended God, the supreme Lord and best of Fathers.

*Is natural sorrow sufficient for a good confession?*

It is not, because it proceeds not from a supernatural motive, but from the love or fear of the world. A mere natural sorrow for our sins worketh death. (*ii Cor. vii. 10.*) If one confess his sins having only a natural sorrow for them, he commits a sacrilege, because the most necessary part of the Sacrament of Penance is wanting.

*What other qualities are necessary for a true contrition?*

Contrition should be interior, proceeding from the heart and not merely from the lips; it must be universal, that is, it must extend to all the mortal sins which the sinner has committed; it must be sovereign, that is, he must be more sorry for having offended God, than for any temporal evil; it must be supernatural, that is, produced in the heart by supernatural motives; namely, because we have offended God, lost His grace, deserved hell, &c.



*What kind of sorrow must we have in order to obtain forgiveness of our sins?*

That sorrow which proceeds from a perfect love of God, and not from fear of temporal or eternal punishment. This perfect contrition would suffice for the forgiveness of sins, if in case of danger of death, there should be a great desire, but no opportunity to confess to a priest.

But the Holy Catholic Church has declared (*Conc. Trid. s. 14. c. 4.*) the imperfect contrition which proceeds from the fear of eternal punishment to be sufficient for the valid reception of the holy Sacrament of Penance.

*Who are those who have reason to fear they have aroused only a natural sorrow for their sins?*

Those who care little about knowing what true sorrow is; those who often commit grievous sins, and do not amend their lives; for if true sorrow for sin had been excited in their hearts, with the firm purpose of amendment, the grace of God in this Sacrament would have strengthened the resolution, and enabled them to avoid sin, at least for a time. On account of their immediate relapse we justly doubt whether they have validly received the sacrament of penance and its sanctifying grace.

*How can the sinner attain true sorrow?*

The sinner can attain true sorrow by the grace of God and his own coöperation. That both are necessary, is shown by the prophet Jeremias, (*Jer. xxxi. 18, 19.*) who prays: Convert me, O Lord, and I shall be converted: for Thou art the Lord, my God. For after Thou didst convert me, I did penance: and after Thou didst shew unto me, I struck my thigh (with sorrow). To which God replies: If thou wilt be converted, I will convert thee. (*Jer. xv. 19.*) We see, therefore, that the first and most essential means for producing this sorrow is the grace of God. It must begin and complete the work of conversion, but it will do this only when the sinner earnestly and faithfully coöperates. When God in whatever way has admonished the sinner that he should be converted, let him ardently implore God for the grace of a true conversion, invoke the intercession of the Mother of the Saviour, his guardian angel, and like the holy penitents, David, Peter, and Magdalen, let him meditate upon the truth that God is a just judge, who hates sin, and will punish it in the eternal torments of hell. Having placed these truths vividly before his eyes, the sinner will reflect further whether by his sins



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he has not himself deserved this punishment, and if by the enlightenment of God he finds he has, he will also see the danger in which he stands, that if God should permit him to die impenitent, he would have to suffer forever in hell. This fear of eternal punishment urges the sinner to hope in God's mercy; for He wishes not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; again, our Redeemer says: I came to call the sinner to repentance, and, there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who does penance, than over ninety-nine just. He considers the patience of God towards him, the graces bestowed upon him during his sinful life; namely his creation, redemption, sanctification in baptism, and many others. He will now contemplate the beauty and perfection of God: "Who art Thou, O my God," he cries, "who art Thou who hast loved me with such an unspeakable love, and lovest me still, ungrateful, abominable sinner, that I am! What is all the beauty of this world of the angels and of the blessed spirits compared to Thine! Thou fountain of all beauty, of all goodness, of all that is amiable, Thou supreme majesty, Thou infinite abyss of love and mercy! I for one vain thought, a short, momentary pleasure, a small, mean gain, could forget, offend and despise Thee! Could I sell, could I forfeit heaven, and eternal joy with Thee! O, could I repair those crimes! Could I but wash them out with my tears, even with my blood?" Through such meditations the sinner, by the grace of God, will be easily moved to sorrow. Without such or similar reflections the formulas of sorrow as read from prayer books or recited by heart, are by no means acts of contrition.

*Should we make an act of contrition before confession only?*

We should make an act of contrition before confession, and not only then, but every evening after the examination of conscience; we should make one immediately after any fault committed, above all when in danger of death; for we know not when God will call us to judgment, or whether we shall then have the grace to receive the sacrament of Penance with proper preparation.

### III. ON THE PURPOSE OF AMENDMENT.

The purpose of amending our life is as necessary for the remission of sin, as contrition; for how could he obtain forgiveness from God, who has not the determination to sin no more? The will to sin cannot exist with the hatred of sin.



*What is necessary for a firm purpose?*

A firm purpose of amendment requires: the determination to avoid sin; to flee from all occasions that might bring the danger of sinning, all persons, places, societies in which we usually sin; bravely to fight against our evil inclinations and bad habits; to make use of all means prescribed by our confessor, or made known to us by God Himself; to repair the injustice we have done; to restore the good name of our neighbor, and to remove the scandal and enmity we have caused.

*Who, then, have no true purpose of amendment?*

Those who do not truly intend to leave the frivolous persons with whom they have associated, and committed sin; to remove the occasions of cursing, swearing, drunkenness, and secret sins, &c.; who have the intention to borrow or to contract debts which they know they cannot pay, or do not even care to pay; to squander the property of their wives and children, letting them suffer want; to frequent bar-rooms, or saloons, fight, gamble, indulge in vile, filthy conversations and detraction, murmur against spiritual and temporal superiors, throw away precious time, and bring, even compel others to do the same. The saloon-keepers, who for the sake of money allure such wretched people, keep them there, and what is still worse, help to intoxicate them, participate in their sins.

## IV. ON CONFESSION.

Confession is a contrite acknowledgment of our sins to a priest who is duly authorized, in order to obtain forgiveness. This acknowledgment of our sins is an important and necessary part of the holy Sacrament of Penance.

Even in the Old Law, a certain kind of confession was prescribed and connected with a sacrifice, called the sacrifice of Atonement; but the forgiveness of sins was effected only through faith in the coming Redeemer, towards whom this sacrifice pointed. (*Lev. v. 5, 6. Num. v. 7.; compare Matt. iii. 6.*) In the new Law, Christ gave to the apostles and their successors, power to forgive, and to retain sins, (*John xx. 21—23.*) and in doing so made them judges. Without confession on the part of the sinner, they cannot act as judges, and do justice in regard to giving punishment and remedies, (*Conc. Trid. sess. 14. c. 6*) and as the sinner



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is but seldom able to make an act of perfect contrition, which obtains the forgiveness of sin without confession, it was necessary that the most merciful Lord, as the Roman Catechism says, (*de poen.* 5. 36.) through the means of confession to the priest, should provide in an easier manner for the common salvation of man. Confession, at the same time, is the best means of bringing man to a knowledge of his sins and of their malice. Therefore, even Adam was obliged to acknowledge his sins, and in the same way Cain was asked by God concerning his brother's murder, although God, the Omniscient, knew the sins of both. The desire to ease the troubled conscience, seems born in man. Thus David says of his crime: Because I was silent, my bones grew old, whilst I cried out all the day long; (*Ps.* xxxi. 3.) and in the book of Proverbs it is said; He that hideth his sins, shall not prosper: but he that shall confess and forsake them, shall obtain mercy. (*Prov.* xxviii. 13.) Constant experience in life verifies these words, and heretics could not entirely abolish private confession, though they rejected the Sacrament of Penance.

*Is confession a human law, or a human invention?*

No, confession was instituted by Christ Himself; for after His resurrection He appeared to His apostles and disciples, and said to them: Peace be with you! As the Father hath sent me, I also send you; that is, the same power to remit sin which the Father has given me, I give to you. When he had said this, he breathed on them; and he said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained. (*John* xx. 21—23; compare *Matt.* xviii. 18.) In these words Christ evidently gave to the apostles and their successors the power to forgive and retain sins. This they can do only when the sins are confessed to them; and, therefore, Christ, when instituting the forgiveness of sins, instituted and connected with it the acknowledgment, that is, the confession of sins. This regulation of Christ was complied with by the first Christians in humility of heart, as is proved in the Acts of the apostles, where we read: And many, (referring to the Christians at Ephesus) of them that believed, came confessing and declaring their deeds. (*Acts.* xix. 18.) And the apostle James exhorts his own: Confess therefore your sins one to another: and pray one for another, that you may be saved. (*St. James* v. 16.) The work founded by Christ must stand, as long as the world, and as the apostles and disciples of our Lord died, their successors



necessarily continued the work, and received the same power from Christ. This is verified by the whole history of His Church. In the very beginning of Christianity, the faithful with great sorrow confessed to the priest all their transgressions, even the smallest and most secret, after which they received absolution. "Let us be sincerely sorry as long as we live," says St. Clement of Rome, a disciple of St. Paul, (*Ep. i. ad Cor.*) "for all evil which we have committed in the flesh, for having once left the world, there will no longer be any confession and penance for us." Tertullian (217 after Christ) writes of those who hid their sins, being ashamed to confess them: "Can we also hide from the knowledge of God that which we conceal from a fellow creature". (*Lib. de qæn. 5. 36.*) Origen († 254), after speaking of baptism, says: "There is still a severer and more tedious way of obtaining remission of sin: when the sinner moistens his pillow with tears, and is not ashamed to confess his sins to the priest of the Lord". (*Hom. 3. in Lev.*) St. Cyprian († 258) writes of those Christians who during the persecutions of his time, had not sinned by openly denying the faith: "Yet because they had but thought of doing so, they make a sorrowful and simple confession to God's priests". (*Sib. de laps.*) Basil († A. D. 379) writes: "Necessarily the sins must be made plain to those to whom the power of the mysteries is confided, that is, to the priests". (*In reg. brev. 288.*) Many more testimonies could be brought from the earliest centuries of Christianity, which make it clear, that Christ Himself instituted confession, and that the faithful always availed themselves of it as a means of remission of sin. It would not have been possible for a human being, though he were the mightiest prince, to have imposed upon Catholic Christianity so hard an obligation as confession, without the special command of Christ the Son of God; nor could any one have invented it without the faithful at once revolting. It is also well known that, in the Oriental Churches which separated from the true Church in the earliest ages, private confession to a priest is yet valued as a divine institution. The Catholic institution of confession, with which, in the earliest centuries; there was even connected a public confession, before the whole congregation, for notorious sinners, is as old as the Church itself, as Pope Leo the Great († 461) proves (*Ep. 136*); "The secret, auricular confession was introduced into the Church as early as the times of the apostles, or their immediate successors." It was instituted by Christ, the God-Man, and instituted for the purpose of enabling the apostles and the priests, their successors, to remit in the confessional the



sins committed after baptism, if the sinner heartily regrets them, sincerely confesses, and renders satisfaction for them, or to retain them if he be unworthy of absolution. From this it is seen that the enemies of the Catholic Church oppose, in rejecting confession, the plain expression of the holy Scriptures, and of entire Christian antiquity, and that it is a detestable calumny to assert that confession is simply a human invention. The divine institution of confession always was and is a fountain of sweetest consolation for sinful man, and thousands have experienced that which is said by the Council of Trent: (*Sess. 14. c. 3. de part.*) "The effect of this Sacrament is reconciliation with God, followed by peace, cheerfulness and consolation of the heart in those who worthily receive this Sacrament."

*What will aid us to make confession easy?*

The consideration of the manifold benefits arising from it; first, forgiveness of all, even the most grievous sins, remission of the guilt and eternal punishment; secondly, the certainty of having again been made a child of God; thirdly, the sweet consolation and desired peace of conscience; fourthly, the necessary remedies which a pious and prudent confessor will prescribe for the cure of the diseases of the soul; finally, the prayer and exhortation of the priest which will also add to the complete conversion of the sinner.

*What should be done to participate in these benefits?*

Besides that which has already been said of the examination of conscience, and especially of sorrow for sin, the confession must be sincere and open-hearted; that is, a correct and exact confession not only of all mortal sins, their kind, circumstances and number, without excuses, or veiling or lessening them, but also a faithful revelation of all other spiritual affairs, fears, doubts, and other wounds of the soul; for a wound which is not shown to the physician, cannot be healed. We should not seek those confessors who are only "mute dogs", (*Isai. lvi. 10.*) and give absolution without hesitation, but we should trust the direction of our souls to learned, pious, and zealous priests, and remain under their guidance, as in physical sickness we remain under the care of an experienced physician, and accept their words as if Christ Himself had spoken.

*How should the false shame which prevents confession be overcome?*

It should be remembered that the priest in the confessional is the representative of Christ, and that whoever lies



to the confessor, seeks to deceive God Himself, who abominates a lie, and at the Last Day will publicly put such a liar to shame. The confessor takes the place of Christ, and after His example must be merciful to the sinner, if, a sinful man himself, he hopes to receive mercy and grace from God. At the same time, no confessor is allowed to reveal the slightest thing heard in confession, even should it cost him his life. It may be considered further that he who conceals a sin in confession, and thus obtains absolution by false pretences, receives no remission, but, on the contrary, commits a new sin, "When man uncovers his sins, God covers them; when man conceals his sins, God reveals them," says St. Augustine. Man can be deceived, but not God, the Omniscient; and who is ashamed to show his wounds to the physician? Why should it be a cause of shame to throw out the poison of sin by a sincere confession? To sin only is shameful, to confess sin is not shameful. But if by all these reflections we are still unable to overcome ourselves so as to confess our sins to a certain confessor we may seek another in whom we have confidence.

## V. ON SATISFACTION AFTER CONFESSION.

Satisfaction is the diligent performance of all the works of penance imposed upon us by the confessor. With this, however, a true penitent will not be satisfied; for in our times, on account of the weakness and little zeal of Christians, a light penance is imposed that they may not be deterred from the reception of the holy Sacraments. To avoid relapsing into sin, one must do penance, and bring forth worthy fruits, (*Luke* xiii. 3.) for God will only then give the grace to persevere. We satisfy God by fasting, prayer, almsdeeds, avoidance of the snares of the world, diffidence in ourselves, and especially by patient endurance of the afflictions and sufferings which He imposes upon us. Those who have committed sin must do penance in this life or submit to everlasting penance in the next.

*Is the heretic right in asserting that man does not need to render satisfaction since Christ has rendered it complete on the cross?*

He is entirely wrong. Christ on the cross did indeed render satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, and man is not capable to atone for one single sin but it does not follow from this that man is not required to do something. To render satisfaction means to perform a duty which has been neglected. Instead of obeying God the sinner,



## 52 INSTRUCTION ON THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

by his sins, disobeys Him. Satisfaction for disobedience requires perfect obedience from the sinner: but this, because of his weakness and corruption, no man is able to render therefore Christ rendered it for us by His perfect obedience even unto the death of the cross. But because Christ has been thus obedient for us, must we not be somewhat obedient also? or which is the same, because Christ for love of us has atoned for our sins by perfect obedience to His Heavenly Father, are we to do no penance for ourselves? It is precisely by this atonement made by Christ that we receive the power of rendering satisfaction. But for this we must, first of all, ask the grace, i. e. pray, to restrain our earthly desires, i. e. fast, and by means of active love (charity) make ourselves susceptible to this grace. St. Paul the Apostle, who calls himself the greatest of sinners, writes of himself: I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in my flesh for his body, which is the Church; (*Col. i. 24.*) and to the Corinthians he writes: But I chastise my body and bring it into subjection: lest perhaps: when I have preached to others, (meaning penance and conversion) I myself should become cast away. (*i. Cor. ix. 27.*) Christ Himself did not censure the Ninivites for their fasting and their penance in sackcloth and ashes, but gave them as an example. (*Matt. xii. 41.*) In the Old Testament we find that even after remitting the sin, God imposed a punishment for it. Thus He let the child of king David die, as punishment for his adultery, even though He had forgiven the sin; (*ii. Kings xii. 13, 14.*) thus Moses and Aaron, because they once distrusted God, were not permitted to enter the Promised Land. (*Num. xx. 24.; Deut. xxxiv. 4.*) According to this doctrine of the Bible, the Catholic Church teaches that there remains a temporal punishment which the sinner must expiate either in this world, or in the next, though on account of the infinite merits of Christ the guilt and eternal punishment of sin are taken away by absolution. In the earliest times of the Church certain works of penance were imposed, which were then very severe, and in the course of time, owing to the indolence of the faithful, were much moderated.

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## INSTRUCTION ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

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LET us therefore make him a little chamber, and put a little bed in it for him and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick, that when he cometh to us, he may abide there". (iv. *Kings*, iv. 13.) Such was the Sunamite woman's regard for the prophet Eliseus, that she would make such preparations for his entertainment! Will we do as much for Christ who is ready to come to us? Take pains, O Christian, to occupy this night in pious thoughts, and aspirations, for the love of God and for the good of your own soul, making yourself worthy to receive the graces which He is ready when He comes, to give you. Think how Mary, who was near her time, and Joseph her spouse obedient to the imperial command, and perfectly submissive to the will of God, journeyed with the greatest inconvenience to Bethlehem, and when, because of the multitude of people, they found no place to receive them they took refuge, as God willed it, in a most miserable stable, at the extreme end of the town. What love does not the Saviour deserve, who for love of us so humbled Himself!

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who makest us rejoice in the yearly expectation of the feast of our redemption: grant, that we who cheerfully receive Thy only-begotten Son as a Redeemer, may behold without fear the same Lord Jesus Christ, coming as our Judge. Who livest &c.

## INSTRUCTION ON CHRISTMAS DAY.

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*What is Christmas Day?*

IT is the day on which Christ Jesus, our Redeemer, was born of the Blessed Virgin in a stable at Bethlehem.

*Why is this festival called "the Holy Night?"*

Because this night has been especially blessed and sanctified by the holy, mysterious birth of the Redeemer of the world.



*Why do priests say three Masses on this day?*

In commemoration of the threefold birth of the Redeemer: of His birth from all eternity in the bosom of His Heavenly Father; of His birth in the fulness of time; and of His spiritual birth in the hearts of the faithful who, by lively faith in Him, receive the power to become children of God. (*John i. 12.*)

*Why is the first Mass said at midnight?*

Because Christ, the true light which came into the world to enlighten those who sat in darkness and the shadow of death, that is, of unbelief and of sin, (*Luke i. 79.*) was born at night, and because the divine birth is incomprehensible to us.

*Why is the next Mass said at daybreak, and the third after sunrise?*

To signify that the birth of Christ, expelling the darkness of ignorance and infidelity, brought us the clear daylight of the knowledge of God, and that the spiritual birth of Christ can take place at any time in the pure soul.

*When does this spiritual birth take place?*

It takes place when the soul, having been cleansed from all sin, makes the firm, unalterable resolution to die to the world and all carnal desires, and arouses in itself the ardent desire henceforth to live only for Christ, and, by His grace, to practice all virtues.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FIRST MASS.

The Introit of this Mass reminds us of the eternal birth of Christ, the Lord. The Lord hath said to me: Thou art my Son, this day (that is, from all eternity) have I begotten thee. (*Ps. ii. 7.*) Why have the Gentiles raged, and the people devised vain things? (*Ps. ii. 1.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who hast made this most sacred night to shine forth with the brightness of the true light: grant, we beseech Thee, that we may enjoy His happiness in heaven, the mystery of whose light we have known upon earth. Thro'.



EPISTLE. (*Tit. ii. 11—15.*) Dearly beloved, the grace of God our Saviour hath appeared to all men, instructing us, that denying ungodliness and worldly desires, we should live soberly, and justly, and godly in this world, looking for the blessed hope and coming of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and might cleanse to himself a people acceptable, a pursuer of good works. These things speak, and exhort, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*In what special manner has the grace and goodness of God been manifested to us?*

In the incarnation and birth of Christ, His Son, whom, in His infinite love, He has made like unto us, our brother and our teacher, by whom we have become children of God, and co-heirs of His kingdom.

*What does Christ by His incarnation desire to teach us especially?*

That we should put aside all unrighteousness, all infidelity and injustice, and endeavor to become like unto Him, who, except in sin, has become altogether like unto us. But especially that we repress the desires of lust, wealth, and honor, and not rest until we have rooted them from our hearts.

*How do we live soberly, justly, and godly?*

We live soberly, when we fulfil all duties towards ourselves; justly, when we fulfil all duties towards our neighbor; and godly, when we fulfil all duties to God.

ASPIRATION. Blessed art Thou, Oh! new-born Saviour, who hast descended from on high to teach me the ways of justice, hast become man and equal to me. In return for this goodness of Thine, I renounce all evil, all sinful desires, words, and deeds. In return for Thy love, I will ever uproot from my heart all carnal desires, and always live soberly, justly, and godly; do Thou by Thy grace, strengthen me in this resolve.





GOSPEL. (*Luke* ii. 1—14.) At that time there went forth a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that the whole world should be enrolled. This enrolling was first made by Cyrenus, the governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary his espoused wife, who was with child. And it came to pass, that when they were there, her days were accomplished, that she should be delivered. And she



brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds watching, and keeping the night-watches over their flock. And behold, an Angel of the Lord stood by them, and the brightness of God shone round them; and they feared with a great fear. And the Angel said to them: Fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people: for this day is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David. And this shall be a sign unto you: You shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger. And suddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God, and saying: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good-will.

*Why, at the time of Augustus, were all the Roman subjects enrolled?*

This happened by a special ordinance of God, that by this enrollment Mary and Joseph should be obliged to go to Bethlehem, that it might be made known to the world, that Christ was really born at Bethlehem, of the tribe of Juda, and the house of David, and that He was the Messiah who had been foretold by the prophets. (*Mich. v. 2.*)

Let us learn from this how the providence of God directs all things according to His will, and consider the obedience which Mary rendered to the command of a heathen emperor, or rather to God who caused the command.

*Why is Christ called the "first-born" of Mary?*

Because she gave birth to no child before Him; she bore none after Him, He was the only Son of Mary, as He was the only-begotten Son of the Heavenly Father.

*Why was Christ born in such poverty?*

To teach us not by words but by example that which He afterwards so often preached and forcibly taught, namely: the love of poverty, the practice of humility and patience



with contempt of the world, and also to confound by His humble birth the foolish wisdom of the world which seeks only honors, pleasures and riches.

*Why was the birth of Christ announced to poor shepherds, and not to King Herod and the chief priests?*

That it might be known that God loves to dwell with poor, simple, pious, faithful people, such as the shepherds were, and reveals Himself to those who are little in their own eyes, (*Math. xi. 25.*) while He despises the proud and leaves them over to their own spiritual blindness.

Let us learn from this to acquire simplicity and humility, and despise pride and cunning, that God may reveal Himself to us by His interior inspirations.

*What is meant by the angelic song of praise: "Glory be to God on high?"*

By this song of praise which the priests usually say in the Mass is meant that the greatest praise and the most heartfelt thanks are due to God for having sent His Son into the world; and that those who have the good will to glorify God by all their actions, will receive peace, that is, all happiness, blessings, and salvation.

Rejoice with the angels over the birth of the Saviour, return thanks to God, and honor Him alone in all things, that you may have that peace: peace with God, peace with yourself and peace with all men. Learn also from the angels, who rejoiced in the graces which man would receive from the birth of Christ, to rejoice, and thank God for the favors which He gives your neighbor, and by rejoicing participate in them.

### INSTRUCTION ON THE SECOND MASS.

In the Introit of this Mass the Church makes use of the words of Isaias: A light shall shine upon us this day: for our Lord is born to us: and he shall be called Wonderful, God, the Prince of peace, the Father of the world to come; of whose reign there shall be no end. (*Isai. ix.*) The Lord hath reigned, he is clothed with beauty: the Lord is clothed with strength, and hath girded himself.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that we, who are filled with the



new light of Thy incarnate Word, may show forth in our works what by faith shineth in our minds. Through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who livest &c.

EPISTLE. (*Titus* iii. 4—7.) DEARLY beloved, the goodness and kindness of God our Saviour hath appeared: not by the works of justice which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the laver of regeneration, and renovation of the Holy Ghost, whom he hath poured forth upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour: that, being justified by his grace, we may be heirs according to hope of life everlasting, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*To whom do we owe our salvation?*

Not to ourselves, nor any good works we may have performed, but entirely to the mercy of God who from all eternity decreed our redemption, and sent His only-begotten Son into this world to accomplish it; which redemption is bestowed upon us in baptism, where we are washed from the stain of sin, and by the rich infusion of the Holy Ghost born again, heirs of eternal life.

*Why, then, had God no mercy on the fallen angels?*

To this question St. John of Damascus replies: "We must know here that the fall was to the angels what death is to man; for the angels there was no repentance after the fall, as for man there is no repentance after death" (*De fid. orthod. lib. 2. c. 4.*) In eternity there is no available contrition and penance, so God showed no mercy to the fallen angels. Let us learn from this, to make ourselves participators in the mercy of God, by contrition and penance while there is yet time.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* ii. 15—20.) AT that time the shepherds said one to another: Let us go over to Bethlehem, and let us see this word that is come to pass, which the Lord hath showed to us. And they came with haste; and they found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in a manger. And seeing they understood of the word that had been spoken to them



concerning this child. And all that heard wondered, and at those things that were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God, for all the things they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

INSTRUCTION. I. The shepherds follow at once the voice of God which calls them to the manger; they exhort one another to do so; they seek the Redeemer and happily find Him; they make Him known to others, and heartily thank God for the grace given them.

Let us follow the inspirations of God with ready obedience; let us exhort one another to virtue by our good example and edifying conversation; let us make good use of the knowledge given us by God, give it to others, and praise God for the same.

II. Mary kept all these words, spoken about her Son, and pondered them in her heart. Let us learn from her to prepare food for our souls by careful meditation on the divine truths that are made known to us: so that we may be preserved and strengthened in spiritual life.

### INSTRUCTION ON THE THIRD MASS.

The Introit of this Mass reminds us of the spiritual birth of Christ, by which He is spiritually born in us: A child is born to us, and a Son is given to us; whose government is upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called the Angel of great counsel. (*Isai. ix.*)

Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle: for he hath done wonderful things. (*Ps. xcvi.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that the new birth of Thine only-begotten Son in the flesh may deliver us who are held by the old bondage under the yoke of sin. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Heb. i. 1—12.*) God, who diversely and many ways, spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these days hath spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all



things, by whom also he made the world. Who being the brightness of his glory, and the figure of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, making purgation of sins, sitteth on the right hand of the majesty on high: being made so much better than the angels, as he hath inherited a more excellent name than they. For to which of the angels hath he said at any time: Thou art my son, to-day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son? And again when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith: And let all the angels of God adore him. And to the angels indeed he saith: He that maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But to the Son: Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of justice is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity: therefore, God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And: Thou in the beginning, O Lord, didst found the earth; and the works of thy hands are the heavens. They shall perish, but thou shalt continue; and they shall all grow old as a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the self-same, and thy years shall not fail.

INSTRUCTION. The greatness of Christ Jesus, the dignity of His divinity and humanity, the love and goodness of His Heavenly Father, who has given Him to us as our teacher, could not be more gloriously described than in this epistle. Learn from it how much you are obliged, because of this, to serve God, to be grateful to Him, and to follow Christ who governs heaven and earth; and whom the angels serve.

ASPIRATION. I thank Thee, a thousand times, O Heavenly Father, that Thou hast spoken to us



through Thy only-begotten Son, in whom Thou art well pleased. With my whole heart, O Father of Mercy, will I listen to Him, and be obedient to all His instructions.



GOSPEL. (*John i. 1—14.*) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was made nothing that was made. In him was life,



and the life was the light of men; and the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men might believe through him. He was not the light, but was to bear witness of the light. That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them he gave power to be made the sons of God, to them that believe in his name. Who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we saw his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.

*What does St. John mean by the Word?*

That the Son of God, who was begotten and brought forth like a word of the mouth from the Father, but in a manner incomprehensible and inscrutable to us, is one with the Father in the divine nature, but different from Him in person; He is also called the Word of the Father, because through Him the Father has spoken and made known the divine will. (*Heb. i. 2.; Matt. xvii. 5.*)

*What is meant by: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God?*

When all things had their beginning the Son of God already was, not made or created, but born of the Father from eternity, with whom and in whom He therefore existed from all eternity. St. John here teaches the divinity, the eternity, and the equality of Christ with the Father.

*What is meant by: All things were made by Him?*

That the Son of God, Himself true God, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, has made all things, visible and invisible.



*What is meant by: In Him was the life?*

It means: The Son of God is the origin and fountain of the spiritual life of our souls upon earth, and of the glorious life in eternity. To give this true life to us, He became man, whereby we are born again, newly created, as it were, from the death of sin to the life of grace and righteousness.

*Why is this life the light of men?*

Because this true life of the soul which Christ has obtained for us, consists in the ever increasing knowledge of God and his salvation, which knowledge also comes from Christ, either externally through holy words and examples, or inwardly by divine inspiration.

*How did the light shine in darkness?*

The Son of God has given the necessary grace to find the true faith to mankind. He still imparts to all men the necessary light, especially by his holy Word which is preached to them, but the hardened sinners reject it, because they wish not to hear of faith and repentance.

*How did St. John the Baptist bear witness of the light?*

By announcing the Saviour to the world, and even pointing Him out when He appeared.

*Who receive Christ?*

Those who walk in the light of His grace, coöperate with it, and so become the children of God.

*How are we to understand: The Word was made flesh?*

We are to understand by it that the Word was not changed into human nature, but that He became incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, thus uniting in Himself two natures, the divine and the human. So Christ is true God, and at the same time true man, therefore God-Man; consequently there are in Christ two wills, the divine and the human. In His humanity He is less than the Father, (*John* xiv. 28.) in His divinity He is equal to the Father; (*John* x. 30.) His humanity filled Him with a natural terror of His sufferings, but His divinity was perfectly united with the will of His Heavenly Father, and could pray: Not my will, but thine be done.



ASPIRATION. O God, our Heavenly Father, who this night hast given to us sinners, in the form of a child from the immaculate womb of Mary, Thine only-begotten Son as our Mediator and Redeemer, we give Thee thanks with heart and lips, and humbly beseech Thee that Thou wilt never permit us to forget such a grace, and that we may sustain ourselves by it in all temptations; that we may be ever grateful to Thee for it, and until death praise, honor, and serve Thee in sanctity. Amen.

*Whence comes the custom of representing in our churches and houses the crib of Bethlehem?*

This custom was introduced by St. Francis of Assisi who, having a particular devotion to the Infant Jesus, was accustomed to represent to himself in this way the stable and manger at Bethlehem the further to excite his love; and as this pious practice is calculated to assist exceedingly in the instruction of the unlearned, especially of children, it was introduced into many congregations.

## THE SOCIETY OF THE HOLY CHILDHOOD FOR THE SALVATION OF HEATHEN CHILDREN.

**M**ANY thousands of heathen children die every year without baptism, and what is most terrible, a great number of these unfortunate children die the most miserable death, and thus perish, soul and body. In the heathen countries, especially in China, a country that contains more than three hundred millions of inhabitants, it is the horrible custom of parents, when they have too many children, or when they are sickly, weak, or deformed to expose them on the streets, or to throw them with a weight around their neck into the water. On the streets the poor little children die of hunger, or are devoured by beasts, in the water their flesh becomes the food of fishes. Many, especially girls, are picked up by the wicked heathens, carried home, and so trained that when they grow up, they may enrich their masters by prostitution. A multitude of others are strangled immediately after birth, their bodies thrown into the water, or into the gutter. No law forbids or punishes this horrible custom. No less than twenty or thirty thousand of these unfortunate children are killed in one year.



## 66 INSTRUCTION ON THE SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

The missionaries who preach the gospel to these heathens witnessed these cruelties with terror without being able to do anything to abolish this awful custom. To see these children die without baptism grieved them. Some sought to gather, baptize and raise them. Good women were engaged for this purpose. But how could the missionaries provide for so many, how support those women who collected these unfortunate children? They had no means. Necessity compelled them to turn to Christian Europe. By touching letters they solicited alms for these little unfortunates. Owing to the sad condition of these children the pious bishop of Nancy, Forbin Janson, became the founder of the society of the holy child Jesus, inviting all children of his diocese to form a society of the Holy Childhood, under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin Mary, for the benefit of the miserable heathen children, giving alms out of love for the Infant Saviour. All under twenty-one years of age, were to belong to it forming clubs of twelve, in honor of the twelve years of Christ's childhood; each member to contribute one cent monthly; and to say one "Hail Mary" every day with the invocation: "Holy Mary, pray for us and for the poor children of the heathens." By means of the money thus collected, the missionaries were enabled to save the heathen children from spiritual and corporal death. The society has been in existence since 1841, and has already embraced all Catholic countries; thousands of pious Christian children deprive themselves of a portion of their food in order to save alms, thereby performing a good work for the love of the child Jesus and the salvation of the children of the heathens. Adults are admitted as honorary members, and would it not be well, beloved reader, for you to join it, and by prayers and alms aid in saving those little ones? This would be indeed a good work, for which rich reward will be given in heaven.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS.

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**I**NTROIT. While all things were in quiet silence, and the night was in the midst of her course, Thy almighty Word, O Lord, came down from heaven, from Thy royal throne. (*Wisd.* xviii. 14. 15.) The Lord hath reigned, he is clothed with beauty: the Lord is clothed with strength, and hath girded himself. (*Ps.* xcii. 1.) Glory be to the Father, &c.



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Almighty and everlasting God, direct our actions according to Thy good pleasure; that in the name of Thy beloved Son we may deserve to abound in good works. Who with Thee &c.

EPISTLE. (*Gal. iv. 1—7.*) BRETHREN, as long as the heir is a child, he differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all: but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed by the father: so we also, when we were children, were serving under the elements of the world. But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law: that he might redeem them who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because you are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying: Abba, Father. Therefore now he is not a servant, but a son; and if a son, an heir also through God.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul desired to instruct the Galatians, many of whom still clung to the Mosaic law, that this was no longer necessary, because Christ had freed them from its hard bondage, which contained merely the rudiments, so to speak, of the one only saving faith, and had made them children and heirs of God, for which they should rejoice.

Ours is a far greater happiness than that which the Jews received, because we, through our ancestors, were converted by apostolic messengers of the faith from heathenism to the true, saving Catholic faith, and by this holy religion were changed from vassals of Satan, into children and heirs of God. What a great advantage is this! Must it not be dearer to us than all the kingdoms of the world? Let us thank the Lord for it, and be careful not to lose this prerogative of being a child of God, an heir to heaven, let us not by sin give ourselves anew, as voluntary slaves to Satan.

GOSPEL. (*Luke ii. 33—40.*) At that time, Joseph and Mary, the mother of Jesus, were wondering at





those things which were spoken concerning him. And Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary his mother: Behold, this child is set for the fall, and for the resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted: and thy own soul a sword shall pierce, that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed. And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser; she was far advanced in years, and had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity. And she was



a widow until fourscore and four years; who departed not from the temple, by fastings and prayers serving night and day. Now she at the same hour coming in, confessed to the Lord; and spoke of him to all that looked for the redemption of Israel. And after they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. And the child grew and waxed strong, full of wisdom: and the grace of God was in him.

*Why did Mary and Joseph wonder at the things which were spoken of the child Jesus?*

They wondered, not because that which was said of the child Jesus by Simeon was new to them, for they already knew why He was sent from God, but because of the marvellous ways in which God revealed the mysteries of the new-born Saviour to Simeon, the shepherds, and to other pious people.

*How is Christ set for the fall of many?*

Christ is set for the fall, that is, for the eternal damnation, of all those who either reject His doctrine, or live not according to its teachings. They themselves, not Christ, are the cause of their damnation on account of their perversity and hard-heartedness. "If I had not come and spoken to them," says Christ, "they would not have sin: but now they have no excuse for their sin." (*John xv. 22.*)

*For whom is Christ the resurrection?*

For those who believe in Him, and live in accordance with the teachings of His doctrine. These, if they persevere will at the Last Day rise to eternal life.

*Why is Christ a sign that shall be contradicted?*

Because, by His birth from a virgin, by His life and death, and especially by His heavenly doctrine, which is entirely opposed to the carnal spirit of this world, Christ became an object of mockery and blasphemy. Even now, according to the saying of St. Bernard, Christ is a sign of contradiction for many Christians who contradict His humility by their pride, His poverty by their avarice, His fast-



ing by their gluttony, His purity by their impurity, His zeal by their indolence, etc., thus denying by their actions that which they confess with their lips, proving thereby that they are Christians but in name, of whom it is written: "Thou hast the name of being alive, but thou art dead." (*Apoc.* iii. 1.)

*What is meant by these words: Thy own soul a sword shall pierce?*

It means that the greatest grief should cut like a sword through the inmost parts of the soul, which came to pass, when Mary heard the calumnies and blasphemies of the Jews against her Son, and when she saw Him die on the cross between two thieves. Meditating on this grief of the most loving mother Mary, St. Bonaventure exclaims: "Never was there grief so great, for never was there Son so loved!"

*What else do we learn from this gospel?*

The widows should learn from Anna, who spent nearly all her life in the temple, to serve God by prayer and fasting; for a widow who prays not, but lives in pleasures, is dead, while she is living. (*i. Tim.* v. 6.) Parents should learn from it, to be careful that their children not only increase in knowledge, but that they by a pious life advance in grace before God and man.

ASPIRATION. O Jesus, Thou new-born Saviour, do Thou move our hearts to the fulfillment of Thy precepts that Thou mayst never be set for our fall; for it would be much better for us, not to have known the ways of righteousness, than having known them, to have departed from them.

## INSTRUCTION ON BLESSING.

*"And Simeon blessed them."*

(*Luke* ii. 34.)

*What is meant by a blessing?*

**A** blessing on the part of God, means the giving to man some spiritual or temporal grace; a blessing on the part of an angel or a man, means the expression in prayer of a wish or desire that God would give to some particular person a corporal or spiritual grace. In the proper sense of the word, only God can give a blessing, because all spiritual and temporal good comes from Him; angels and



men can only wish and ask of God that He would bestow His gifts.

*Have we examples of blessing in the Bible?*

Yes, for the angels blessed Jacob, (*Gen. xxxii. 26.*) and Jacob blessed his sons and grandsons, (*Gen. xlviii. 15.*) Melchisedech blessed Abraham, (*Gen. xiv. 19.*) and Rebecca was blessed by her brothers. (*Gen. xxiv. 60.*)

*Is it well for parents to bless their children?*

Yes, for God frequently ratifies the blessings wished by the parents, as in the case of Isaac who blessed Jacob, and Jacob who blessed his own sons. (*Gen. xlix.*) And, on the contrary, God permits the curses of parents to be fulfilled on their children as history shows. "The father's blessing establisheth the houses of the children; but the mother's curse rooteth up the foundation." (*Ecclus. iii. 11.*)

*What power has the priest's blessing?*

A very great one, because it is given by the priest, the vicar of Christ on earth, in the name of Jesus, and of the Church founded by Him, in which He has deposited the plenitude of His blessings. The Church expresses this, when the bishop, anointing the hands of the newly ordained, makes the sign of the cross over them: "All that they bless, is blessed; that they consecrate, is consecrated and sanctified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." The blessing of the priest is to be prized therefore, and an obstacle not set to it by a sinful life. Parents should ask his blessing for their children when he happens to visit them. Children were brought to Christ that He might lay His hands on them and bless them. (*Matt. xix. 13.*)

[See the instruction on benedictions, sixth Sunday after Pentecost.]

*What is the effect of God's blessing?*

In spiritual life it gives great joy and strength to practice virtue; and in physical life it gives fruitful prosperity in our occupations and undertakings. Therefore, all is contained in the blessing of God, and he who receives it, is richer than if he possessed the whole world. We should endeavor by a pious life to secure this blessing, for it rests only on the head of the just. (*Prov. x. 6.*)

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## INSTRUCTION ON NEW YEAR'S DAY.

*Why is this day so called?*

**B**ECAUSE the secular year begins with this day, as the ecclesiastical year begins with the first Sunday in Advent.

*What should we do on this day?*

An offering of the new year should be made to God, asking His grace that we may spend the year in a holy manner, for the welfare of the soul.

*Why do we wish each other a "happy new year?"*

Because to do so is an act of Christian love; but this wish should come from the heart, and not merely from worldly politeness, otherwise we would be like the heathens, (*Matt. v. 47.*) and receive no other reward than they.

*What festival of the Church is celebrated to-day?*

The festival of the Circumcision of our Lord, who, for love of us, voluntarily subjected Himself to the painful law of the Old Covenant, that we might be freed from the same.

*What was the Circumcision?*

It was an external sign of the Old Law, by which the people of that day were numbered among the chosen people of God, as now they become, by baptism, members of the Church of Christ.

*What is the signification of Circumcision in the moral or spiritual sense?*

It signifies the mortification of the senses, of evil desires, and inclinations. This must be practiced by Christians now, since they have promised it in baptism which would be useless to them without the practice of mortification; just as little as the Jew by exterior Circumcision is a true Jew, just so little is the baptized a true Christian without a virtuous life. Beg of Christ; therefore, to-day, to give you the grace of the true Circumcision of heart.

### PRAYER.

I thank Thee, O Lord Jesus, because Thou hast shed Thy blood for me in Circumcision, and beg Thee



that by Thy precious blood I may receive the grace to circumcise my heart and all my senses, so that I may lead a life of mortification in this world, and attain eternal joys in the next. Amen.

*[The Introit of the Mass is the same as is said in the third Mass on Christmas.]*



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who, by the fruitful virginity of blessed Mary, hast bestowed upon mankind the rewards of eternal salvation; grant, we beseech Thee, that we may feel the benefit of her intercession for us, through whom we have deserved



to receive the author of life, our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who livest and reignest etc.

*[The Epistle is the same as is said in the first Mass on Christmas.]*

GOSPEL. (*Luke ii. 21.*) AT that time, after eight days were accomplished that the child should be circumcised, his name was called Jesus, which was called by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

*Why did Jesus submit to Circumcision?*

That He might show His great love for us, which caused Him even at the very beginning of His life, to shed His blood to cleanse us thereby from all our sins. Furthermore to teach us obedience to the commandments of God and His Church, since He voluntarily subjected Himself to the Jewish law, although He was not in the least bound by it, which ordered that every male child should be circumcised on the eighth day after its birth. (*Lev. xii. 3.*)

*Why was He named Jesus?*

Because Jesus means Redeemer and Saviour, and He had come to redeem and save the world. (*Matt. i. 21.*) This is the holiest, most venerable, and most powerful name by which we can be saved.

*What power has this name?*

The greatest power, for it repels all attacks of the evil Spirit, as Jesus Himself says. (*Mark xvi. 17.*) And so great is the efficacy of this most holy name that even those who are not righteous, can by it expel devils. (*Matt. vii. 22.*) It has power to cure physical pains and evils, as when used by the apostles, (*Acts. iii. 3-7.*) and Christ promised that the faithful by using it could do the same. (*Mark xvi. 17.*) St. Bernard calls the name of Jesus a "Medicine;" and St. Chrysostom says, "This name cures all ills; it gives succor in all the ailments of the soul, in temptations, in faint-heartedness, in sorrow, and in all evil desires, &c." "Let him who cannot excite contrition in his heart for the sins he has committed, think of the loving, meek, and suffering Jesus, invoke His holy name with fervor and confidence, and he will feel his heart touched and made better," says St. Lawrence Justinian. It overcomes and



dispels the temptations of the enemy: "When we fight against Satan in the name of Jesus," says the martyr St. Justin, "Jesus fights for us, in us, and with us, and the enemies must flee as soon as they hear the name of Jesus." It secures us help and blessings in all corporal and spiritual necessities, because nothing is impossible to him who asks in the name of Jesus, whatever tends to his salvation will be given him. (*John* xiv. 13.) Therefore it is useful above all things, to invoke this holy name in all dangers of body and soul, in doubts, in temptations, especially in temptations against holy chastity, and still more so when one has fallen into sin, from which he desires to be delivered; for this name is like oil (*Cant.* i. 2.) which cures, nourishes, and illumines.

*How must this name be pronounced to experience its power?*

With lively faith, with steadfast, unshaken confidence, with deepest reverence and devotion, for in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. (*Philipp.* ii. 10.) What wickedness, then, is theirs who habitually pronounce this name carelessly and irreverently, upon every occasion! Such a habit is certainly diabolical; for the damned and the devils constantly abuse God and His holy name.

*Why does this name so seldom manifest its power in our days?*

Because Christian faith is daily becoming weaker, and confidence less, while perfect submission to the will of God is wanting. When faith grows stronger among people, and confidence greater, then will the power of this most sacred name manifest itself in more wonderful and consoling aspects.

### PRAYER TO JESUS IN DIFFICULTIES.

O Jesus! Consolation of the afflicted! Thy name is indeed poured out like oil; for Thou dost illumine those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death; Thou dost disperse the blindness of the soul and dost cure its ills; Thou givest food and drink to those who hunger and thirst after justice. Be also, O Jesus! my Saviour, the physician of my soul, the healer of its wounds. O Jesus! Succor of those who are in need, be my protector in temptations! O Jesus! Father of



the poor, do Thou nourish me! O Jesus! Joy of the angels, do Thou comfort me! O Jesus! my only hope and refuge, be my helper in the hour of death, for there is given us no other name beneath the sun by which we may be saved, but Thy most blessed name Jesus!

EXHORTATION. St. Paul says: All whatsoever you do in word or in work, all things do ye in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. (*Coloss. iii. 17.*) We should, therefore, follow the example of the saints, and continually say, at least in our hearts: "For love of Thee, O Jesus, I rise; for love of Thee I lie down; for love of Thee I eat, drink, and enjoy myself; for love of Thee I work, speak, or am silent." Thus we will accustom ourselves to do all in the name of Jesus, by which everything is easily or at least meritoriously accomplished.

#### PRAYER TO BE SAID ON NEW YEAR'S DAY.

O God, Heavenly Father of Mercy, God of all Consolation! we thank Thee that from our birth to this day, Thou hast so well preserved us, and hast protected us in so many dangers; we beseech Thee, through the merits of Thy beloved Son, and by His sacred blood which He shed for us on this day in His circumcision, to forgive all the sins which, during the past year, we have committed against Thy commandments, by which we have aroused Thy indignation and wrath against ourselves. Preserve us in the coming year from all sins, and misfortunes of body and soul. Grant that from this day to the end of our lives, all our senses, thoughts, words, and works, which we here dedicate to Thee for all time, may be directed in accordance with Thy will, and that we may finally die in the true Catholic faith, and enjoy with Thee in Thy kingdom a joyful new year, that shall know no end. Amen.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE VIGIL OF EPIPHANY.

*[The Introit, the Prayer of the Church, and the Epistle, are the same as on the Sunday after Christmas.]*

GOSPEL. (*Matt. ii. 19—23.*) AT that time: when Herod was dead, behold an Angel of the Lord appeared



in sleep to Joseph in Egypt, saying: Arise, and take the child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead that sought the life of the



child. Who arose, and took the child and his mother, and came into the Land of Israel. But hearing that Archelaus reigned in Judea in the room of Herod his father, he was afraid to go thither: and being warned in sleep, retired into the quarters of Galilee. And coming he dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was said by the prophets: that he shall be called a Nazarite.

INSTRUCTION. In this we see how wonderfully God deals with His own. He indeed permits them to be persecuted and oppressed, but never to be suppressed, and from time to time He gives them many consolations. Jesus was forced to flee into Egypt to escape the persecution of Herod, because God did not wish to save Him by an evident miracle, but in an ordinary manner. He lived in poverty in Egypt, but for no longer time than God willed, who having confounded His enemies, and taken them out of His way, called Him back, and He passed His youth in peace and quietness. The dispensations of God the Father in regard to His Son, and the care He had for Him, should be a consolation for the just; they must be happy if God deals with them as He did with His Son; they will certainly, like Christ, be made to suffer no more than God permits, and their sufferings will be ever accompanied by consolations. St. Joseph avoided the land of Judea, because he feared since Archelaus succeeded Herod in the government, he might also imitate him in his cruelty. A Nazarite means, a low person, a despised person. Jesus was so called, because He grew up at Nazareth, and spent the greater part of His life in that city, which was held in such contempt by the Jews that they could not believe, any thing good could come out of Nazareth. (*John* 1. 46.)

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FESTIVAL OF EPIPHANY.

*What festival is this?*



HIS festival is set apart to solemnly commemorate the coming of the three wise men from the East, guided by a miraculous star which appeared to them, and directed them to Bethlehem, where they found Christ in the stable; here they honored and adored Him and offered gifts to Him.

*Why is this day called Epiphania Domini, or Apparition of the Lord?*

Because the Church wishes to bring before our mind the three great events in the life of Christ, when He made known to man His divinity: the coming of the wise men from the East, through whom He revealed Himself to the Gentiles as the Son of God; His baptism, on which occasion His Divinity was made known to the Jews, and His first miracle at the marriage of Cana, by which He revealed Himself to His disciples.

In the Introit of the Mass the Church sings to-day with joy: Behold the Lord the Ruler is come; and the kingdom is in his hand, and power and dominion. (*Mal. iii.*) Give to the king thy judgment, O God; and to the king's son thy justice. (*Ps. lxxi. i.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who on this day by the leading of a star didst reveal Thine only-begotten Son to the Gentiles; mercifully grant, that we who know Thee now by faith may be brought to contemplate the beauty of Thy majesty. Thro' Jesus &c.

LESSON. (*Isai. lx. 1—6.*) Arise, be enlightened, O Jerusalem; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and a mist the peoples; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall walk in thy light, and kings in the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thy



eyes round about, and see; all these are gathered together, they are come to thee: thy sons shall come from afar, and thy daughters shall rise up at thy side. Then shalt thou see, and abound, and thy heart shall wonder and be enlarged, when the multitude of the sea shall be converted to thee, the strength of the Gentiles shall come to thee. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Madian and Ephraim; all they from Saba shall come, bringing gold and frankincense, and showing forth praise to the Lord.

EXPLANATION. The Prophet Isaias, in this epistle, predicts that the light of the Lord, which is Christ, will rise over Jerusalem, the prototype of the Church, and that the Gentiles who knew nothing of the true God, would come to walk in that light which Christ, by His doctrine and holy life, would cause to shine, and that numberless nations, from all parts of the world, would assemble as her children to adore the one true God. The fulfilment of this prophecy commenced with the adoration of the Magi, who are to be regarded as the first Christian converts of the Gentiles; the Church, therefore, very properly celebrates this day with great solemnity. We ought also to share in the joy of the Church, because our ancestors were Gentiles, and like the three wise men were called to the true faith. Let us exclaim with Isaias: Give praise, O ye heavens, and rejoice, O earth, ye mountains give praise with jubilation: because the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy on his poor ones. (*Isai. xlix. 13.*)

GOSPEL. (*Matt. ii. 1—12.*) WHEN Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Juda, in the days of king Herod, behold there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying: Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East, and are come to adore him. And king Herod hearing this, was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And assembling together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he enquired of them where Christ should be born. But they said to him: In Bethlehem of Juda; for so it is written by the prophet: And thou,





Bethlehem, the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda, for out of thee shall come forth the ruler that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, privately calling the wise men, learned diligently of them the time of the star which appeared to them; and sending them into Bethlehem, said: Go and diligently enquire after the child, and when you have found him, bring me word again, that I also may come and adore him. Who having heard the king, went their way; and behold, the star which they had



seen in the East went before them, until it came and stood over where the child was. And seeing the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And entering into the house, they found the child with Mary his mother, and falling down they adored him. And opening their treasures, they offered him gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having received an answer in sleep that they should not return to Herod, they went back another way into their own country.

*What caused the three kings to undertake so tedious a journey?*

A star which God permitted to appear in their land, at the sight of which they were inwardly enlightened, so that they at once recognized its signification. Let us learn from these kings who so readily responded to the inspiration of God, by immediately undertaking so difficult a journey, to follow without delay the promptings of divine grace, and from their zeal, and the fearlessness with which they asked Herod where the Messiah would be found, we should learn to seek and practice, without fear of men, whatever is necessary for our salvation.

*Why did Herod fear, and all Jerusalem with him?*

Because Herod, a proud, imperious, cruel, and therefore jealous king, was afraid, when he heard of a new-born king, that he would be deprived of his throne, and punished for his vices. A bad conscience is always ill at ease, and has no peace. There is no peace to the wicked, saith the Lord God. (*Isai. lvii. 21.*) Jerusalem, that is, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, feared because many of them were attached to Herod, and others, especially the chief priests and the scribes, feared they would be punished for their secret crimes, when the Messiah would come, of whom they knew that He shall judge the poor with justice, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked. (*Isai. xi. 4.*)

*Why did Herod assemble the chief priests and the scribes?*

Partly to find from them where the Messiah was to be born, partly and principally because God so directed it, that Herod and the chief priests, knowing the time and place of the Messiah's birth, would have no excuse for their infidelity. In the same way God often makes known to us,



in the clearest manner the most wholesome truths, yet we heed them as little as did the Jews who had sufficient knowledge of the Messiah, indeed, even showed the way to the three kings, but made no use of it for themselves, and were therefore cast away.

*Why did Herod say he wished to adore the child?*

This he did out of wicked hypocrisy and dissimulation. He had no other intention than to put Jesus to death, and therefore affected piety to find out exactly the time and place of His birth. Thus do those murderers of souls who desire the fall of the innocent; they do not let their evil intentions be made known at once, and so they put on sheep's clothing, feign piety and devotion, until they creep into the heart from which, by flattery, and irony about religion and virtue, and by presents, they expel shame, the fear of God, and thus murder the soul.

*Why did the kings fall down and adore Christ?*

Because by the light of faith they saw in the infant at Bethlehem God Himself, and, notwithstanding the poverty of His surroundings, recognized in Him the expected Messiah, the new-born king of the Jews, and by prostrating themselves before Him paid Him the homage of their country.

*Why did the kings offer gold, frankincense and myrrh?*

Because it was the ancient Eastern custom, never to appear without presents before a prince or king, and the three kings, as the holy Fathers universally teach, enlightened by the Holy Ghost, desired by their presents to honor Christ as God, as king, and as man. Of this the venerable Bede writes: "The first of the kings, named Melchior, offered gold to Christ the Lord and king; the second, named Caspar, frankincense to the divinity of Christ; and the third, Balthassar, myrrh, by which was expressed that Christ, the Son of man, must die."

*How can we bring similar offerings to Christ?*

We offer gold to Him, when we love Him with our whole heart, and out of love to Him, present Him our will by perfect obedience and continual self-denial, as our will is our most precious treasure. We also offer Him gold when we assist the poor by alms given in His name. We offer Him frankincense when we devoutly and ardently



pray to Him, especially when we meditate upon His omnipotence, love, goodness, justice and mercy. We offer Him myrrh when we avoid carnal desires, mortify our evil inclinations and passions, and strive for purity of body and soul.

*Why did the kings return by another way to their own country?*

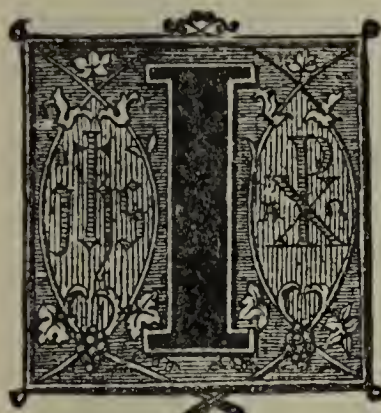
This they did by command of God. From the example of the three wise men we should learn to obey God rather than man, that we must be obedient to His directions, even if we do not understand them; so the three kings obeyed, although they may not have understood why God commanded them to flee from Herod. After we have found God we should walk in the path of virtue, and not return to our old sinful ways. "Our fatherland is paradise, heaven," writes St. Gregory. "We have departed from it by pride, disobedience, abuse of the senses, therefore it is needed that we return to it by obedience, contempt of the world, and by taming the desires of the flesh; thus we return to our own country by another road. By forbidden pleasures we have forfeited the joys of paradise, by penance we must regain them."

ASPIRATION. Give me, O divine Saviour, the faith of those Eastern kings. Enlighten my understanding with the light which enlightened them, and move my heart, that I may in future follow this light, and sincerely seek Thee who hast first sought me. Grant also, that I may really find Thee, with the wise men may adore Thee in spirit and in truth, and bring to Thee the gold of love, the frankincense of prayer, and the myrrh of penance and mortification, that, having here offered Thee the sacrifice of my faith, I may adore Thee in Thy eternal glory. Amen.

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## FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.



IN the Introit of the Mass of this day the Church exhorts us to a joyous adoration of Christ by the following words: Upon a high throne I saw a man sitting, whom a multitude of angels adore singing together: behold Him the name of whose empire is to eternity. (*Isai. vi.* Sing joyfully to God, all the earth: serve the Lord with gladness. (*Ps. xcix. 2.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Attend, O Lord, we beseech Thee, of thy heavenly mercy, to the desires of Thy suppliant people; and grant that they may both perceive what they ought to do, and may have strength to fulfil the same. Thro' our Lord.

EPISTLE. (*Romans xii. 1—5.*) BRETHREN, I beseech you by the mercy of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing unto God, your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be reformed in the newness of your mind: that you may prove what is the good, and the acceptable, and the perfect will of God. For I say, by the grace that is given me, to all that are among you, not to be more wise than it behoveth to be wise, but to be wise unto sobriety: and according as God hath divided to every one the measure of faith. For as in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another in Christ Jesus our Lord.

EXPLANATION. The apostle entreats, even conjures us by all the mercies we have received to bring to God a living sacrifice; namely, the mortification of our carnal desires, and the practice of every virtue, a holy, pure and immaculate sacrifice agreeable to God, intended for His glory alone; not a dead sacrifice as the Jews offered by killing animals, nor an unholy one as the Gentiles offered



by polluting their bodies. This living, holy, God-pleasing sacrifice should be the offering of our body; but this does not exclude the sacrifice of our spirit, because all our actions, the corporal as well as spiritual, should be directed to God, the end for which we were created. The sacrifice of the spirit is made when we overcome pride, anger, impatience &c. and by avoiding wilful distractions during prayer and divine worship. Like David we should have a contrite and humble heart to present to the Lord; this is a most pleasing sacrifice in His eyes, one which He will never despise. Thus we render a reasonable service, and are, as St. Peter says, (i. *Peter* ii. 9.) a kingly priesthood, because we govern, like kings, our evil inclinations, and offer with body and soul a continual sacrifice to God. The apostle further exhorts us not to become like the world, that is, not to follow the corrupt manners and principles of the children of the world; not to desire those things at which the world aims; not to love that which the world loves; not to act as the world acts; but rather seek constantly to change our evil disposition, by combating our corrupt and evil inclinations and by practicing virtue instead. We must cease to be the old worldly man, and become a new heavenly man; to be such, we must carefully seek to know in all things what is pleasing to God, and therefore perfect and good. This is the necessary science to which St. Paul alludes, when he says, that we should not wish to know more than is proper. All worldly arts and sciences will not help us to gain heaven, if we do not endeavor to learn thoroughly that which faith teaches, and what God demands. Even if we have made great progress in this holy science we should not presume to think more of ourselves than what we really are, nor violate charity by contempt of others less instructed, for God gives to every one, in some measure, the gift of faith. This gift of faith we should use in order to continually glorify the body of Christ, His Church, whose members we are, and enable us to lead such a life that others, being edified, may be brought into the true fold.

ASPIRATION. Grant, O Jesus, that by mortification, humility, and contrition, I may offer my body and my soul as a living, holy, and pleasing sacrifice to Thee, and that I may never defile them by impurities.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* ii. 42—52.) AND when Jesus was twelve years old, they going up into Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast, and having fulfilled





the days, when they returned, the child Jesus remained in Jerusalem; and his parents knew it not. And thinking that he was in the company, they came a day's journey, and sought him among their kinsfolks and acquaintance. And not finding him, they returned into Jerusalem, seeking him. And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his wisdom and his answers. And seeing him,



they wondered. And his mother said to him: Son, why hast thou done so to us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said to them: How is it that you sought me? did ye not know that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the word that he spoke unto them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and was subject to them. And his mother kept all these words in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom, and age, and grace with God and men.

*Why did our Saviour go with His parents to Jerusalem to the temple?*

Because God commanded (*Deut. xvi. 16.*) that all the male Israelites should appear, three times a year on certain festivals, and offer sacrifice to Him in the temple; Jesus fulfilled this commandment to set us an example that we, according to the will of the holy Catholic Church, should willingly and devoutly be present at the services of the Church on Sundays and holydays of obligation. Neither the distance from the church nor the difficulties of the way should prevent our attendance, since Jesus did not shun a three days' journey to the temple.

*Why does the gospel say according to the custom of the feast?*

That we may understand, that like Mary and Joseph, we should be punctual in observing the ecclesiastical festivals and holy usages, and like true Catholics should observe them. Parents should require their children at an early age to take part in prayer, attend church and school, and see that they conduct themselves quietly and reverently while there. Mary and Joseph took the holy Child Jesus with them to the temple.

*Why did the child Jesus remain in Jerusalem?*

Because of His love of prayer and communion with His Heavenly Father, and to show, even then, some rays of His divinity, by which to make known that He had come for the glory of His Father, and to procure our salvation. The glory of God and the salvation of our souls should be our chief object in life.



*Why did Mary and Joseph search so diligently for Jesus?*

Because they were fearful lest they should lose Him whom they loved so exceedingly. We should learn from this, how careful we should be not to lose Jesus by sin, or having lost Him, how anxiously we should seek by penance to find Him. The parents of Jesus by their diligent search and inquiries for the divine Infant teach and rebuke those parents who care less for the Christian education of their children than for their temporal advantages, who pay no attention to the persons with whom their children associate, nor to the places which they frequent, whether they learn things that are useful to them, and who for the sake of some temporal advantage permit their children sinful intimacy with evil-minded persons. From these parents God will one day demand the souls of their children with severest justice.

*Why was our Saviour found in the temple in the midst of the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions?*

To teach us that we ought to seek the knowledge necessary for our salvation, and attend carefully to the sermons and instructions on Christian doctrine; we should by no means be ashamed to ask questions of our pastors, when we are in doubt, and should listen to their answers. Was Christ, the Eternal Wisdom, ashamed to ask questions and to answer? Why should we ignorant people hesitate? It is much to be regretted that persons who have many important things concerning their spiritual welfare on their minds, through pride and false shame, would rather go to perdition than ask advice, solely for fear of showing their ignorance.

*Why did Mary say: Son, why hast thou done so to us?*

These words were forced from her by pain at the absence of her Son, whom she loved above all things, and not by indignation, for He was blameless. Mary's conduct should teach parents to remember their duty of caring for their children, and punish them when they do wrong.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE VIRTUE OF OBEDIENCE.

*He was subject to them.*

*(Luke ii. 51.)*

**F**ROM this all Christians should learn to be obedient to the commandments of God and of the Church. God has united life or death, blessing or malediction with obedience or disobedience to His commandments, and the



Bible (i. *Kings* xv. 22.) shows that obedience pleases God more than sacrifices or the fat of rams, and that He despises disobedience as He does witchcraft and idolatry. We must be obedient to the Church, because Christ Himself with His holy Spirit lives in her, and governs her, and has said: Who hears not the Church, let him be to thee a heathen and a publican, therefore, shut out from eternal life. We must be obedient to our parents, because they, are placed over us by God, and we are indebted to them, under Him, for life and many benefits. Those children who do not assist their parents, when they are old, poor, and helpless, or are ashamed of them, have reason to be afraid, since even Christ Jesus, the God-Man, was obedient and subject in all things to His poor mother, and to an humble mechanic who was only His foster-father. Cursed be he that honoureth not his father and mother; (*Deut.* xxvii. 16.) how much more cursed those who despise, deride and abandon their parents? Their eyes will one day be picked out by ravens. (*Prov.* xxx. 17.) If God commanded obstinate and disobedient children to be stoned, (*Deut.* xxi. 20.) what do those not deserve who even strike or abuse their parents?

*How did Jesus advance in age, wisdom and grace?*

He showed new effects of the wisdom and grace with which He was filled, as He advanced in years, and thus teaches us to progress the more in virtue, and fulfil the duties of our state in life that we may attain perfection hereafter.

ASPIRATION. Most amiable Jesus! who in the twelfth year of Thy age, didst permit Thyself to be found in the temple by Thy parents, and, as an example for us, wast humbly obedient to them, grant that we may diligently attend to the important affair of our salvation, willingly carry the yoke of Thy law from our youth, and be always obedient to the laws of Thy Church, to our parents, and superiors. Prevent uneducated youth from growing reckless, and preserve them from a scandalous life. Give parents wisdom and grace to educate their children according to Thy will in all virtue. Grant to us all, that we may never lose Thee by sin, or if we have lost Thee, anxiously to seek



Thee, happily find Thee, and with Thy grace more and more increase in wisdom and in virtue. Amen.

## TRUE PIETY.

*They found Him in the temple.*

*(Luke ii. 46.)*

**M**ANY people deceive themselves in regard to true piety, because their imagination represents it to them according to the effect produced by their passions or disposition of mind. He who fasts often and willingly believes that he is pious, though in his heart he nourishes a secret hatred, and while he fears to wet the tip of his tongue with wine, even with water, lest he should not live temperately enough, finds pleasure in detraction and slander, that unquenchable thirst for the blood of his neighbor. Another, because he is accustomed daily to recite a long string of prayers, esteems himself pious, though he gives vent afterwards to haughty, bitter, offensive language, hurting people at home and abroad. Another keeps his purse open for the poor, but keeps his heart ever closed to the love of his enemy, whom he will not forgive; another forgives his enemy with all his heart, but will not pay his creditors, until forced by law. All these think themselves pious, and are perhaps so regarded by the world, but in truth they are far from being pious. In what then does true piety consist? In the perfect love of God. This love is called the beautiful love, because it is the ornament of the soul, and attracts to itself with complacency the eyes of the Divine Majesty. When it strengthens us to do good, it is called the strong love; when it causes us to do that good quickly, carefully, and repeatedly, it is called piety. The ostrich has wings, it is true, but never uses them to fly; the chickens fly heavily and not high; but the eagles, the doves, and the swallows, fly high and swiftly, and do not easily tire. The sinners are but earthly people, they creep upon the ground; the just, who are still imperfect, rise, it is true, towards heaven but seldom, and then but slowly and heavily. But there are some, true, pious souls, who like the doves and the eagles soar high on strong, swift wings to God. In a word, piety is nothing else than a certain active, swift energy of the spirit, with which the strong love in us, or we with it, performs, as far as it is possible to us, all good. As the strong love urges us to keep God's commandments, the perfect love, that is, piety, urges us to keep them carefully and with all possible zeal.



No one is just or pious who does not keep all God's commandments without exception; for, to be just we must possess the strong love, and to be pious we must possess besides, a certain eagerness to profit by all the occasions of doing good, that present themselves. Thus St. Francis de Sales writes in his *Philothea*, from which it is seen that true piety consists not in special devotions, or the practice of special good works, but in the zealous, earnest, continuous obedience to the commandments and performance of duty for the love of God.

## SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.



**I**N the Introit of this day's Mass the Church calls upon all creatures to thank God for the Incarnation of His only-begotten Son. Let all the earth adore Thee, O God and sing to Thee: let it sing a psalm to Thy name. (*Ps.* lxxv. 4.) Shout with joy to God all the earth, sing ye a psalm to His name: give glory to His praise. (*Ps.* lxxv. 1—2.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** Almighty and eternal God, who disposest all things in heaven and on earth: mercifully hear the supplications of Thy people, and give Thy peace to our times. Through our Lord, etc.

**EPISTLE.** (*Romans* xii. 6—16.) **BRETHREN:** We have different gifts, according to the grace that is given us: either prophecy, to be used according to the rule of faith, or ministry in ministering, or he that teacheth in doctrine, he that exhorteth in exhorting, he that giveth with simplicity, he that ruleth with carefulness, he that sheweth mercy with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Hating that which is evil, cleaving to that which is good: loving one another with the charity of brotherhood: with honour preventing one another: in carefulness not slothful: in spirit fervent: serving the Lord: rejoicing in hope: patient in tribulation: instant in prayer: communicating to the



necessities of the saints: pursuing hospitality: bless them that persecute you: bless and curse not. Rejoice with them that rejoice, weep with them that weep: being of one mind, one towards another: not minding high things, but consenting to the humble. Be not wise in your own conceits.

**EXPLANATION.** St. Paul in this epistle exhorts every Christian to make good use of the gifts of God; if one receives an office, he must see well to it, so that he can give an account to God of the faithful performance of his duties. He exhorts especially to brotherly love which we should practice by charitable works; such as, receiving strangers hospitably, giving alms to those who are in need, and to those who by misfortune or injustice have lost their property; he commands us, at the same time, to rejoice in the welfare of our neighbor, as we rejoice at our own good fortune, and to grieve at his misfortunes as we would over those which befall us.

*How is brotherly love best preserved?*

By the virtue of humility which makes us esteem our neighbor above ourselves, consider his good qualities only, bear patiently his defects, and always meet him in a friendly, respectful, and indulgent manner. Humility causes us to live always in peace with our fellow-men, while among the proud, where each wishes to be the first, there is continual strife and dissatisfaction. (*Prov. xiii. 10.*)

**INSTRUCTION FOR SUPERIORS.**

**T**HOSE have to expect a severe sentence from God, who merely for temporal gain, seek profitable offices, and thrust themselves therein whether capable or not, and if capable care very little whether they fulfil the duties required, or perhaps make the fulfilment of them depend upon bribes. Of such God makes terrible complaint: Thy princes (judges) are faithless, companions of thieves: they all love bribes, they run after rewards. They judge not for the fatherless; and the widow's cause comes not into them. (*Isai. i. 23.*) A most severe judgment shall be for them that bear rule. (*Wisd. vi. 6.*)

**ASPIRATION.** Grant us, O Lord, Thy grace, that according to Thy will, we may follow the instruc-





tions of St. Paul in regard to humility and love, have compassion upon all suffering and needy, think little of ourselves, and descend to the lowest, that we may, one day, be elevated with them in heaven.

GOSPEL. (*John* ii. 1—11.) AT that time there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee: and the mother of Jesus was there. And Jesus also was invited, and his disciples, to the marriage. And the wine failing, the mother of Jesus saith to him: They have no wine. And Jesus saith to her: Woman, what is it to me and



to thee? my hour is not yet come. His mother saith to the waiters: Whatsoever he shall say to you, do ye. Now there were set there six water-pots of stone, according to the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three measures apiece. Jesus saith to them: Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And Jesus saith to them: Draw out now, and carry to the chief steward of the feast. And they carried it. And when the chief steward had tasted the water made wine, and knew not whence it was, but the waiters knew who had drawn the water; the chief steward calleth the bridegroom, and saith to him: Every man at first setteth forth good wine; and when men have well drank, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee: and manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

*Why was Christ and His mother present at this marriage?*

In order to honor this humble and God-fearing couple who, with faithful hearts, had invited Him and His mother to their wedding; to give us an example of humility; to assist them in their poverty, and save their good name by changing water into wine; to reveal His dignity as the Messiah to His disciples by this miracle; and to sanctify by His presence the marriages that are contracted in the spirit of the Church.

Alas! how few marriages of our time could Jesus honor with His presence, because He is invited neither by fervent prayer, nor by the chaste life of the couple: He is excluded rather, by the frequent immorality of the married couple and their guests.

*Why was Mary interested in this married couple?*

Because she is merciful, and the Mother of Mercy, and willingly assists all the poor and afflicted, who fear God. From this incident, St. Bonaventure judges of the many graces which we can hope for through Mary, now that she reigns in heaven; "For", says he, "if Mary while yet on earth, was so compassionate, how much more so is she



now reigning in heaven!" He gives the reason by adding: "Mary now that she sees the face of God, knows our necessities far better than when she was on earth, and in proportion to the increase of her compassion, her power to aid us has been augmented." Ah! why do we not take refuge in all our necessities to this merciful mother, who although unasked assists the needy?

*Why did Christ say to Mary: Woman, what is it to me and to thee?*

This seemingly harsh reply of Christ was no reproach, for Mary had made her request only through love and mercy, and Christ calls those blessed who are merciful, but He wished to show that in the performance of divine work, the will of His heavenly Father alone should be consulted. He meant to remind her that He had not received the gift of miracles from her as the son of woman, but from His eternal Father, in accordance with whose will He would do that which she asked when the hour designed by God would come. Though the hour had not come, yet He granted the wish of His mother, who knew that her divine Son refused none of her requests, and so she said to the servants: "Whatsoever He shall say to you, do ye." Behold the great power of Mary's intercession! Neglect not, therefore, to take refuge to this most powerful mother!

*What are we taught by the words: My hour is not yet come?*

These words teach us, that we should in all things await God's appointed time, and in things belonging to God and His honor, act only by divine direction, without any human motives.

*What does the scarcity of wine signify?*

In a spiritual sense the want of wine may be understood to signify the lack of love between married people, which is principally the case with those who enter this state through worldly motives, for the sake of riches, beauty of person, or who have before marriage kept up sinful intercourse. These should ask God for the forgiveness of their sins, bear the hardships of married life in the spirit of penance, and change the wrong motives they had before marriage; by doing so God will supply the scarcity of wine, that is the lack of true love, and change the waters of misery into the wine of patient affection.



*Why did Christ command them to take the wine to the steward?*

That the steward, whose office required him to be attentive to the conduct of the guests, and to know the quality of the wine, should give his judgment in regard to the excellence of this, and be able to testify to the miracle before all the guests.

ASPIRATION. O my most merciful Jesus! I would rather drink in this world the sour wine of misery than the sweet wine of pleasure, that in heaven I may taste the perfect wine of eternal joy.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY.

*What is Matrimony?*

**M**ATRIMONY is the perfect, indissoluble union of two free persons of different sex, for the purpose of propagating the human race, mutually to bear the burdens of life and to prevent sin., (i. Cor. vii. 2.)

*Who instituted Matrimony?*

God Himself, the Creator of all things. (*Gen. i. 27—28.*) He brought to man the helpmate, whom He formed from one of the ribs of Adam, that she who came from his heart, might never depart therefrom, but cling to him in the indissoluble bond of love. (*Gen. ii. 18, 24.*) To this original, divine institution Christ refers, (*Matt. xix. 4—6.*) and the Church declares the bond of marriage perpetual and indissoluble.

*Is Matrimony a Sacrament?*

Yes; according to the testimony of the Fathers, the Church has held it such from the times of the apostles, which she could not do, had Christ not raised it to the dignity of a Sacrament. St. Paul even calls it a great Sacrament, because it is symbolical of the perpetual union of Christ with His Church; and the Council of Trent declares: "If any one says that Matrimony is not really and truly one of the seven Sacraments of the Church instituted by Christ, but an invention of men that imparts no grace, let him be anathema." (*Conc. Trid. Sess. 24. c. 1.*)

*What graces does this Sacrament impart?*

The grace of preserving matrimonial fidelity inviolate; the grace of educating children as Christians; of patiently



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enduring the unavoidable difficulties of married life, and of living peaceably with each other. Married people are indeed greatly in need of these graces, in order to fulfil their mutual obligations.

*What is the external sign in the Sacrament of Matrimony?*

The union of two single persons in Matrimony, which according to the regulations of the Council of Trent, (*Conc. Trid. Sess. 24. c. 1.*) must be formed publicly in the presence of the pastor, or with his permission before another priest, and two witnesses.

*What preparations are to be made to receive the grace of this Sacrament?*

1. The first and best preparation is a pure and pious life.
2. The light of the Holy Ghost should be invoked to know whether one is called to this state of life.
3. The parents and the father-confessor should be asked for advice.
4. The choice should be made in regard to a Christian heart, and a gentle disposition rather than to beauty and wealth.
5. The immediate preparation is, to purify the conscience, if it has not already been done, by a good general confession, and by the reception of the most holy Sacrament of the Altar. Before their marriage the young couple should ask their parents' blessing, should hear the nuptial Mass with devotion, with the intention of obtaining God's grace to begin their new state of life well, and finally they should commend themselves with confidence to the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary and her spouse St. Joseph.

*Why are there so many unhappy marriages?*

Because so many people prepare the way by sins and vices, and continue to sin without interruption, and without true amendment until marriage, therefore always make sacrilegious confessions, even perhaps immediately before marriage. Besides this many enter the married life on account of carnal intentions, or other earthly motives; in many cases they do not even ask God for His grace; without any proper preparation for such an important, sacred act, on their marriage day they go to church with levity and afterwards celebrate their wedding with but little modesty. Is it any wonder that such married people receive no blessing, no grace, when they render themselves so unworthy?

*Why did God institute married life?*

That children might be brought up honestly and as Christians, and that they should be instructed especially in



matters of faith; that married people should sustain each other in the difficulties of life, and mutually exhort one another to a pious life; and lastly, that the sin of impurity might be avoided. For they who in such manner receive matrimony as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power. (*Tob. vi. 17.*)

*With what intentions should the married state be entered?*

With such intentions as the young Tobias and his bride had, who before the marriage ceremony, ardently prayed God for His grace, and took their wedding breakfast in the fear of the Lord. (*Tob. xiv. 15.*) Hence God's blessing was with them until death. If all young people would enter the married state thus, it would certainly be holy, God-pleasing and blessed, and the words of St. Paul, spoken to wives, would come true unto them: Yet she shall be saved by bearing children, if she continue in faith, and love, and sanctification with sobriety. (*i. Tim. ii. 15.*)

*Why are the bans of marriage published three times in Church?*

That all impediments which would render the marriage unlawful may be made known. Such impediments are: consanguinity, clandestine marriages, &c. Therefore, any one who is aware of such impediments, is bound to make them known to the pastor.

*Why is the marriage performed in the presence of the parish-priest?*

Because the Catholic Church expressly declares that those marriages which are not performed in presence of the pastor, or with his permission before another priest, and two witnesses, are null and void; (*Conc. Trid. Sess. xxiv. c. 1.*) and because the blessing of the priest, which he imparts in the name of the Church, gives the couple, if they are in a state of grace, strength, fortitude and grace to be faithful to each other, to endure all trials patiently, and to be safe from all the influences of the evil enemy.



*Why do they join hands before the priest, and two witnesses?*

By this they bind themselves before God and His Church to remain true to each other, and to be ready to assist each other in all adversities. The bridegroom puts a ring on the bride's finger which should remind her of her duty of inviolable fidelity; to this end the priest signs and seals this holy union with the unbloody Sacrifice of the New Law.

*Can the bond of marriage be dissolved in the Catholic Church?*

A valid marriage, contracted with the free consent of each of the parties, can according to the plain doctrine of the Scriptures, the constant teaching and practice of the Church, be dissolved only by the death of one of the parties. If the pope or a bishop, for important reasons, gives a divorce, this is only partial, and neither can marry again while the other lives. Such a marriage would not be valid. How pure and holy are the doctrine and practice of the Catholic Church in this the most important and sacred of all human relations, preserving its inviolability and sanctity; while, on the contrary, by means of the wanton doctrine of the heretics, which for trivial reasons entirely dissolves the marriage contract, this sacred union is made the deepest ignominy of mankind, and the play-ball of human passions and caprice!

*What is thought of mixed marriages, or marriages between Catholics and Protestants?*

The Catholic Church has always condemned such marriages, because of the great dangers to which the Catholic party is unavoidably exposed as well as the offspring. Such marriages promote indifference in matters of religion, by which the spiritual life of the soul is destroyed; they are a hinderance to domestic peace, cause mutual aversion, quarrels, and confusion; they give scandal to servants; they interfere with the Christian education of the children, even render it impossible, and they frequently lead to apostasy and despair. But the Catholic Church condemns especially those mixed marriages, in which either all or a number of the children are brought up in heresy, and she can never bless and look upon those as her children who do not fear to withdraw themselves and their own children from the only saving faith, and expose them to the danger of eternal ruin. Therefore, those Catholics who enter the matrimonial union with Protestants, although the marriage



if lawfully contracted is valid, commit a mortal sin if they permit their children to be brought up in heresy, and should it not be their full intention to bring up their children in the Catholic faith at the time of their marriage, they would commit a sacrilege.

*What should the newly married couple do immediately after the ceremony is performed.*

They should kneel and thank God for the graces received in this holy Sacrament, in such or similar words: "Ratify, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that which by Thy grace Thou hast wrought in us, that we may keep that which in Thy presence we have promised unto the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." That they may keep their promise made at the altar, they should always remember the duties laid down to them by the priest at the time of their marriage, and the exhortations which are taken from the epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians, (*Eph.* v. 29. 31.) wherein he instructs married people how they should comport themselves towards each other, and recalls to them as an example the union of Christ with His Church, and His love for her. To the husbands he says, they should love their wives as Christ loved His Church, for which He even gave Himself up to death; from this is seen, that men should assist their wives even unto death, in all need, and not treat them as servants. To the wives St. Paul says, that they as the weaker should be in all reasonable things obedient to their husbands, as the Church is obedient to Christ; for as Christ is the head of the Church, so is the husband the head of the wife. Experience proves there is no better way for women to win the hearts of their husbands than by amiable obedience and ready love, while, on the contrary, a querulous, imperative deportment robs them of their husbands' affections, and even causes them to be regarded with aversion. St. Paul says further; that husbands should love their wives (and consequently wives their husbands) as their own bodies, because married people are, as it were, one. They shall be two in one flesh; no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ doth the Church. (*Eph.* v. 29. 31.) How unjustly and barbarously do those act, who, instead of loving one another, rather hate and outrage each other, and cause the loss of their property, and by detraction steal their honor! These do not consider that he who hates and disgraces his partner in life, hates and disgraces himself; while according to the



words of St. Paul he who loves her, loves himself. If married people would remain in constant love and unity, it is most necessary that they should patiently bear with each other's infirmities, wrongs, and defects, exhort one another with mildness and affection, keep their adversities, trials, and sufferings as much as possible to themselves, and complain in prayer only to God, who alone can aid them. By impatience, quarrels, and complaints the cross becomes only heavier and the evil worse. Finally, not only on their wedding-day, but often through life, they should earnestly consider, that they have not entered the married state that they may inordinately serve the pleasures of the body, but to have children who will one day inhabit heaven according to the will of God; as the angel said to Tobias: "For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power." (*Tob. vi. 17.*)

PRAYER. Most merciful Jesus! who didst work Thy first miracle at the wedding in Cana by changing water into wine, thereby revealing Thy divine power and majesty, and honoring matrimony: grant we beseech Thee, that Thy faithful may ever keep sacred and inviolate the holy sacrament of Matrimony, and that they may so live in it truthfully, in the fear of the Lord, that they may not put an obstacle in the way of obtaining heaven for themselves, and their children.





## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS.

*[Second Sunday after Epiphany.]*



*Who instituted this festival?*

POPE Innocent XIII. in the year 1721 commanded that the most holy name of Jesus should be solemnly honored throughout the Catholic world. St. Bernard with the sanction of the Apostolic See, had established the solemn veneration of this most holy name in his order a few centuries before.

In the Introit of this day's Mass, the Church proclaims the glory of this name: In the name of Jesus let every knee bow of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth; and let every tongue confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father. (*Phil. ii. 10. 11.*) O Lord our Lord, how wonderful is thy name in the whole earth! (*Ps. viii. 2.*) Glory be to the Father &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who didst ordain thine only-begotten Son to be the Saviour of mankind, and didst command that he should be called Jesus: mercifully grant that we may enjoy in heaven the blessed vision of him whose holy name we venerate upon earth. Through the same, etc.

LESSON. (*Acts iv. 8—12.*) In those days, Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said: Ye princes of the people and ancients, hear: If we this day are examined concerning the good deed done to the infirm man, by what means he hath been made whole, be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God hath raised from the dead, even by him this man standeth here before you whole. This is the stone which was rejected by you the builders; which is become the head of the corner:



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neither is there salvation in any other. For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved.

EXPLANATION. This lesson speaks of the omnipotent power of the name of Jesus, through which miracles are not only performed, but also on which our salvation depends. Jesus alone can give us redemption and happiness; He alone under heaven has been given to man by God, that through Him happiness could be reached; He alone can break the fetters of error and sin in which all mankind lies captured. He alone is the truth, He alone, as the Son of God, has power to render perfect satisfaction for sin, and to make us truly good; and the good alone can be saved. Cling, therefore, ever faithfully and firmly to Jesus, and depart not from Him; without Him you can accomplish nothing; with Him, through Him, you can accomplish all things.

*[For the gospel of this day, see the gospel of New Year's day.]*

### REMARKS OF St. BERNARD ON THE SWEET NAME OF JESUS.

**T**HE sweet name of Jesus produces in us holy thoughts, fills the soul with noble sentiments, strengthens virtue, begets good works, and nourishes pure affections. All spiritual food leaves the soul dry, if it contain not that penetrating oil, the name Jesus. When you take your pen, write the name Jesus: if you write books, let the name of Jesus be contained in them, else they will possess no charm or attraction for me; you may speak, or you may reply, but if the name of Jesus sounds not from your lips, you are without unction and without charm. Jesus is honey in our mouth, light in our eyes, a flame in our heart. This name is the cure for all diseases of the soul. Are you troubled? think but of Jesus, speak but the name of Jesus, the clouds disperse, and peace descends anew from heaven\*. Have you fallen into sin? so that you fear death? invoke the name of Jesus, and you will soon feel life returning. No obduracy of the soul, no weakness, no coldness of heart can resist this holy name; there is no heart which will not soften and open in tears at this holy name. Are you surrounded by sorrow and danger? invoke the name of Jesus, and your fears will

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\* St. Bernardine says the same: "Does grief bow us heavily, then we but the more loudly call on Jesus."



vanish. Never yet was human being in urgent need, and on the point of perishing, who invoked this help-giving name, and was not powerfully sustained. It was given us for the cure of all our ills; to soften the impetuosity of anger, to quench the fire of concupiscence, to conquer pride, to mitigate the pain of our wounds, to overcome the thirst of avarice, to quiet sensual passions, and the desires of low pleasures. If we call to our minds the name of Jesus, it brings before us His most meek and humble heart, and gives us a new knowledge of His most loving and tender compassion. The name of Jesus is the purest, and holiest, the noblest and most indulgent of names, the name of all blessings and of all virtues; it is the name of the God-Man, of sanctity itself. To think of Jesus is to think of the great, infinite God who, having given us His life as an example, has also bestowed the necessary understanding, energy and assistance to enable us to follow and imitate Him, in our thoughts, inclinations, words and actions. If the name of Jesus reaches the depths of our heart, it leaves heavenly virtue there. We say, therefore, with our great master, St. Paul the Apostle: If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema. (i. Cor. xvi. 22.)

### THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.



HE Introit of this day's Mass says: Adore God, all ye His angels: Sion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Jud are rejoiced. The Lord hath reigned; let the earth rejoice; let the many islands be glad. (*Ps.* xcvi. 1.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Almighty everlasting God, mercifully look upon our infirmity, and stretch forth the right hand of Thy majesty for our protection. Through our etc.

EPISTLE. (*Rom.* xii. 16—21.) BRETHREN, be not wise in your own conceits. To no man rendering evil for evil: providing good things not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as is in you, having peace with all



men; not revenging yourselves, my dearly beloved: but give place unto wrath; for it is written: Revenge is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. But if thy enemy be hungry, give him to eat; if he thirst, give him to drink; for doing this, thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil by good.

*When are we overcome by evil?*

When we wish to take revenge. "Revenge is no sign of courage," says St. Ambrose, "but rather of weakness and cowardice. As it is the sign of a very weak stomach to be unable to digest food, so it is the mark of a very weak mind to be unable to bear a harsh word." "Are you impatient," says the same saint, "you are overcome; are you patient, you have overcome."

*What should we do if our reputation is injured?*

We should leave its revenge, or its defence and protection to God, who has retained that for Himself. "But as a good name," says St. Francis de Sales, "is the main support of human society, and as without it we could not be useful to that society, but even hurtful to it on account of scandal, we should feel bound, for love of our neighbor, to aim after a good reputation, and to preserve it." We should not be too sensitive about this, however, for too great a sensitiveness makes one obstinate, eccentric, and intolerable, and only tends to excite and increase the malice of the detractors. The silence and contempt with which we meet a slander or an injustice, is generally a more efficacious antidote than sensitiveness, anger, or revenge. The contempt of a slander at once disperses it, but anger shows a weakness, and gives the accusation an appearance of probability. If this does not suffice, and the slander continues, let us persevere in humility, and lay our honor and our soul into the hands of God, according to the admonitions of the Apostle.

*How do we "heap coals of fire on the head of our enemy?"*

When we return him good for evil, for seeing our well meaning towards him, the flush of shame reddens his face for the wrongs he has done us. St. Augustine explains these words thus: "By giving food and drink or doing other kindnesses to your enemy, you will heap coals, not of anger,





but of love, upon his head, which will inflame him to return love for love." Learn therefore, from the example of Christ and His saints, not to allow yourself to be overcome by evil, but do good to those that hate and persecute you.

ASPIRATION. Ah, that I might, according to the words of St. Paul, so live that I may be a child of the Heavenly Father, who lets His sun shine on the just and the unjust!

GOSPEL. (*Matt. viii. 1—13.*) AT THAT TIME, when Jesus was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him; and behold, a leper came and



adored him, saying: Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, stretching forth his hand, touched him, saying: I will, be thou made clean. And forthwith his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith to him, See thou tell no man: but go, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift which Moses commanded for a testimony unto them. And when he had entered into Capharnaum, there came to him a centurion, beseeching him, and saying: Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, and is grievously tormented. And Jesus saith to him: I will come and heal him. And the centurion making answer, said: Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man subject to authority, having under me soldiers; and I say to this man: Go, and he goeth; and to another: Come, and he cometh; and to my servant: Do this, and he doeth it. And Jesus hearing this, marvelled; and said to them that followed him: Amen I say to you, I have not found so great faith in Israel. And I say to you that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast into the exterior darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said to the centurion: Go, and as thou hast believed, so be it done to thee; and the servant was healed at the same hour.

*Why did the leper say: "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean?"*

He believed Christ to be the promised Messiah, who as true God had the power to heal him. From this we learn to have confidence in the omnipotence of God, who is a helper in all need, (*Ps. cvi. 6. 13. 19.*) and to leave all to the will of God, saying: Lord, if it be pleasing to Thee, and well for me, grant my petition.



*Why did Jesus stretch forth His hand and touch the leper?*

To show that He was not subject to the law which forbade the touching of a leper through fear of infection, which could not affect Jesus; to reveal the health-giving, curative power of His flesh, which dispelled leprosy by the simple touch of His hand; to give us an example of humility and of love for the poor sick, that we may learn from Him to have no aversion to the infirm, but lovingly to assist the unfortunate sick for the sake of Jesus who took upon Himself the leprosy of our sins. The saints have faithfully imitated Him in their tender care for those suffering from the most disgusting diseases. Oh, how hard it will be for those to stand before the Tribunal of God at the Last Day, who cannot even bear to look at the poor and sick!

*Why did Christ command the leper to tell no man?*

To instruct us that we should not make known our good works in order to obtain frivolous praise, (*Matt. vi. 1.*) which deprives us of our heavenly reward.

*Why did Christ send the healed leper to the priest?*

That he might observe the law which required all the healed lepers to show themselves to the priests, to offer a sacrifice, to be examined and pronounced clean; that the priest if he beheld the miracle of the sudden cure of the leper, might know Him who had wrought the cure, to be the Messiah; and finally, to teach us that we must honor the priests because of their high position, even when they do not live in a manner worthy of their dignity, as was the case with the Jewish priests.

*What is taught by the centurion's solicitude for his servant?*

That masters should take care of their sick servants, see that they are attended to in their illness, and above all that they are provided with the Sacraments. It is unchristian, even cruel and barbarous, to drive from the house a poor, sick servant, or to leave him lying in his distress without assistance or care.

*Why did Christ say: I will come and heal him?*

Because of His humility, by which He, although God and Lord of lords, did not hesitate to visit a sick servant. Here Christ's humility puts to shame many persons of po-



sition who think themselves too exalted to attend to the wants of a poor servant.

*Why did the centurion say: Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof?*

Because he recognised Christ's divinity and his own nothingness, and therefore regarded himself as unworthy to receive Christ into his house.

From this we learn to humble ourselves, especially when we receive Christ into our hearts, hence the priest in giving holy Communion uses the centurion's words, exhorting those to humility who are about to receive.

*Why did he add: But only say the word, and my servant shall be healed?*

By this he publicly manifested his faith in Christ's divinity and omnipotence, because he believed that Christ, though absent, could heal the servant by a word.

If a Gentile centurion had such faith in Christ, and such confidence in His power, should not we Christians be ashamed that we have so little faith, and place so little confidence in God?

*What is meant by: Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast into the exterior darkness?*

This was said by Christ in reference to the obdurate Jews who would not believe in Him. Many pagans who receive the gospel, and live in accordance with it, will enjoy heavenly bliss with the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were the most faithful friends of God, while the Jews, God's chosen people, who as such, possessed the first claim to heaven, will, because of their unbelief and other sins, be cast into outer darkness, that is, into the deepest abyss of hell, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Thus it will be with those Christians who do not live in accordance with their faith. Therefore, fear lest you, for want of cooperation with God's grace, be eternally rejected, while others who have faithfully corresponded to the divine inspirations will enter into your place in the kingdom of heaven.

ASPIRATION. O Jesus, rich in consolations! grant me the leper's faith and confidence, that in all things



I may rely upon Thy omnipotence, and may resign myself to Thy divine will, and may ever honor Thy priests. Grant me, also, O most humble Jesus! the centurion's humility, that for Thy sake, I may compassionately assist my neighbor, and by doing so render myself worthy of Thy grace and mercy.

## ON RESIGNATION TO THE WILL OF GOD.

*Lord, if thou wilt.*

*(Matt. viii. 2.)*

**T**HOSE who in adversity as well as in prosperity, perfectly resign themselves to the will of God, and accept whatever He sends them with joy and thanks, possess heaven, as St. Chrysostom says, while yet upon earth. Those who have attained this resignation, are saddened by no adversity, because they are satisfied with all that God, their best Father, sends them, be it honor or disgrace, wealth or poverty, life or death. All happens as they wish, because they know no will but God's, they desire nothing but that which He does and wills. God does the will of them that fear Him. (*Ps. cxliv. 19.*) In the lives of the ancient Fathers we find the following: The fields and vineyards belonging to one farmer were much more fertile and yielding than were his neighbors'. They asked how it happened and he said: they should not wonder at it, because he always had the weather he wished. At this they wondered more than ever: How could that be? "I never desire other weather," he replied, "than God wills; and because my desires are conformable to His, He gives me the fruits I wish." This submission to the divine will is also the cause of that constant peace and undimmed joy of the saints of God, with which their hearts have overflowed here below, even in the midst of the greatest sufferings and afflictions. Who would not aspire to so happy a state? We will attain it if we believe that nothing in this world can happen to us except by the will and through the direction of God, sin and guilt excepted, for God can never be the cause of them. This the Holy Ghost inculcates by the mouth of the wise man: Good things and evil, life and death, poverty and riches, are from God, (*Ecclus. xi. 14.*) that is, are permitted or sent by God; all that which comes from God, is for the best, for God doeth all things well. (*Mark vii. 37.*) Whoever keeps these two truths always in mind, will certainly be ever contented with the will of God, and always consoled; he will taste while yet



on earth the undisturbed peace of mind and foretaste of happiness which the saints had while here, and which they now eternally enjoy in heaven, because of the union of their will with the divine will.

## INSTRUCTION FOR MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

**T**HE master of a house should be careful to have not only obedient, faithful, willing, and industrious servants in his home, as had the centurion in the gospel, but still more, pious and God-fearing ones, for God richly blesses the master because of pious servants. Thus God blessed Laban on account of the pious Jacob, (*Gen. xxx. 30.*) and the house of Putiphar because of the just Joseph. (*Gen. xxxix. 5.*) The master should look to the morals and Christian conduct of his servants, and not suffer irreligious subjects in his house, for he must, after this life, give an account before the tribunal of God, and he makes himself unworthy of the blessing of God, often liable to the most terrible punishment by retaining such. Will not God punish those masters and mistresses who suffer those under them to seek the dangerous occasions of sin, keep sinful company, go about at night, and lead scandalous lives? Will not God, one day, demand the souls of servants from their masters? The same punishment which will befall those who deny their faith, will rest upon careless masters and mistresses, for St. Paul the Apostle writes: But if any man have not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. (*1. Tim. v. 8.*)

Subjects should learn from the centurion's servants who obeyed his only word, that they also should willingly, faithfully, and quickly do every thing ordered by their masters, unless it be something contrary to the law of God. They should recollect that whatever they do in obedience to their superiors, is done for God Himself. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not serving to the eye, as pleasing men, but in simplicity of heart, fearing God. Whatsoever you do, do it from the heart as to the Lord, and not to men: knowing that you shall receive of the Lord the reward of inheritance. Serve ye the Lord Christ. (*Col. iii. 22—24.*)

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

*[The Introit of the Mass as on the preceding Sunday.]*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who knowest us to be set in the midst of so great perils, that because of the frailty of our nature we cannot stand; grant to us health of mind and body, that those things which we suffer for our sins, we may by Thy aid overcome. Through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord &c.

EPISTLE. (*Romans* xiii. 8—10.) BRETHREN, owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. For thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is comprised in this word: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The love of our neighbor worketh no evil. Love, therefore, is the fulfilling of the law.

*What is meant by St. Paul's words: He that loveth his neighbor, hath fulfilled the law?*

**S**T. Augustine in reference to these words says: that he who loves his neighbor, fulfils as well the precepts of the first as of the second tablet of the law. The reason is, that the love of our neighbor contains and presupposes the love of God as its fountain and foundation. The neighbor must be loved on account of God; for the neighbor cannot be loved with true love, if we do not first love God. On this account, the holy Evangelist St. John in his old age, always gave the exhortation: Little children, love one another. And when asked why, he answered: Because it is the command of the Lord, and it is enough to fulfil it. Therefore in this love of the neighbor which comes from the love of God and is contained in it, consists the fulfilment of the whole law. (*Matt.* xxii. 40.)





GOSPEL. (*Matt.* viii. 23—27.) AT THAT TIME, when Jesus entered into the boat, his disciples followed him. And behold, a great tempest arose in the sea, so that the boat was covered with waves; but he was asleep. And they came to him and awaked him, saying: Lord, save us, we perish. And Jesus saith to them: Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then rising up, he commanded the winds and the sea, and there came a great calm. But the men wondered, saying: What manner of man is this, for the winds and the sea obey him?



*Why did Christ sleep in the boat?*

To test the faith and confidence of His disciples; to exercise them in enduring the persecutions which they were afterwards to endure; to teach us that we should not waver in the storms of temptations. St. Augustine writes: "Christ slept, and because of the danger the disciples were confused. Why? Because Christ slept. In like manner thy heart becomes confused, thy ship unquiet, when the waves of temptation break over it. Why? Because thy faith sleeps. Then thou shouldst awaken Christ in thy heart; then thy faith should be awakened, thy conscience quieted, thy ship calmed."

*Why did Christ reproach His disciples when they awaked Him and asked for help?*

Because of their little faith and trust; for if they firmly believed Him to be true God, they would necessarily believe He could aid them sleeping as well as waking.

Nothing so displeases God as to doubt His powerful assistance. Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh (mortal man) his arm (aid), and whose heart departeth from the Lord. Blessed be the man that trusteth in the Lord, and the Lord shall be his confidence. (*Jerem. xvii. 5. 7.*) God sometimes permits storms to assail us, such as poverty, persecution, sickness, so that we may have occasion to put our confidence in Him alone. Of this St. Bernard very beautifully says: "When the world rages, when the wicked become furious, when the flesh turns against the spirit, I will hope in Him. Who ever trusted in Him, and was put to shame?" We should therefore trust in God only, and take refuge to Him, invoking Him as did the disciples: Lord, save us, we perish; or cry out with David: Arise, why sleepest thou, O Lord? Arise, and cast us not off to the end. (*Ps. xliii. 23.*)

*Why did Jesus stand up and command the sea to be still?*

To show His readiness to aid us, and His omnipotence to which all things are subject. His disciples who saw this miracle, wondered and said: What manner of man is this, for the winds and the sea obey Him?

We see daily in all creatures the wonders of the omnipotence, the wisdom, and the goodness of God, and yet we are not touched; we continue cold and indifferent. The reason is, that we look upon all with the eyes of the body



and not with the eyes of the soul; that is, we do not seek to ascend by meditation to the Creator, and to judge from the manifold beauty and usefulness of created things the goodness and the wisdom of God. The saints rejoiced in all the works of the Lord; a flower, a little worm of the earth would move the heart of St. Francis of Sales, and St. Francis the Seraph, to wonderment and to the love of God; they ascended, as on a ladder, from the contemplation of creatures to Him who gives to every thing life, motion, and existence. If we were to follow their example, we would certainly love God more, and more ardently desire Him; if we do not, we live like irrational men, we who were created only to know and to love God.

ASPIRATION. Grant us, O good Jesus! in all our needs, a great confidence in Thy divine assistance, and do not allow us to become faint-hearted; let Thy assistance come to us in the many dangers to which we are exposed; command the turbulent winds and waves of persecution to be still, and give peace and calmness to Thy Church, which Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood, that we may serve Thee in sanctity and justice, and arrive safely at the desired haven of eternal happiness. Amen.

### ON THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

*But he was asleep.*

*(Matt. viii. 24.)*

**I**T is an article of faith in the holy Catholic Church that God has not only created the world, but that He sustains and governs it; this preservation and ruling of the whole world and of each individual creature is called Providence. There are people who think that God is too great a Lord to busy Himself about the care of this world, that to do so is beneath His majesty; it was enough for Him to create the world, for the rest, He leaves it to itself or to fate, enjoys His own happiness, and, as it were, sleeps in regard to us. Thus think some, but only the ignorant and impious. Were He as these imagine Him, He would not or could not have aught to do with creation. If He could not, then He is neither all-wise nor almighty, if He would not, then He is not good; and if He knows nothing of the world, then He is not omniscient.



If we once believe that God created the world, (and what rational man can doubt it?) then we must also believe He rules and sustains it. Can any work of art, however well constructed and arranged, subsist without some one to take charge of and watch over the same? Would not the greatest of all master-pieces, the world, therefore come to the greatest confusion and fall back into its original nothingness, if God, who created it from nothing, did not take care of its further order and existence? It is indeed true that the method of Divine Providence with which God controls all things is so mysterious that, when considering some events, one is persuaded to admit a necessary fate, an accident, the course of nature, the ill will of the devil or man, as the fundamental cause. Yet in all this the providence of God is not denied, for nothing does or can happen accidentally, not the smallest thing occurs without the knowledge, permission, or direction of God. Not one sparrow shall fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. (*Matt.* x. 29. 30.) Chance, fate, and luck are but the ideas of insane or wicked men, which even the more rational heathens have rejected, and the course of nature is but the constant, uninterrupted, all-wise and bountiful preservation and government of creation through God. The perverted will of men or of the devil is but the instrument which God in His all-wise intention, uses to effect the good, for He knows how to produce good from evil, and, therefore, as St. Augustine says, "permits the evil that the good may not be left undone." If we peruse the history of our first parents, of Abraham, of Joseph in Egypt, of Moses, of the people of Israel, of Job, Ruth, David, Tobias, Esther, Judith and others, we will easily see everywhere the plainest signs of the wisest Providence, the best and most careful, absolute power, by virtue of which God knows how to direct all things according to His desire, and for the good of His chosen ones. The gospel of this day furnishes us an instance of this? Why did Christ go into the boat? Why did a storm arise? Why was He asleep? Did all this occur by accident? No, it came about designedly by the ordinance of Christ that His omnipotence might be seen, and the faith and confidence of His disciples be strengthened.

Thus it is certain that God foresees, directs, and governs all; as Scripture, reason, and daily experience prove. Would we but pay more attention to many events of our lives, we would certainly notice the providence of God, and give ourselves up to His guidance and dispensations. The Lord



ruleth me, and I shall want nothing, says David. (*Ps.* xxii. i.) And we also, we shall want nothing if we resign ourselves to God's will, and are contented with His dispensations in our regard; while, on the contrary, if we oppose His will, we shall fall into misfortune and error. God must rule over us with goodness, or with sternness. He is no slumbering God. Behold! He shall neither slumber nor sleep, that keepeth Israel. (*Ps.* cxx. 4.)

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

*[For the Introit of this day see the Introit in the Mass of the third Sunday after Epiphany.]*

On this Sunday mention is made of the practice of Christian virtues, and of God's sufferance of the wicked upon earth, that by them the just may be exercised in patience.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Keep, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy household by Thy continual mercy; that as it leans only upon the hope of Thy heavenly grace, so it may ever be defended by Thy protection. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

EPISTLE. (*Col.* iii. 12—17.) BRETHREN, put ye on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, the bowels of mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if any have a complaint against another; even as the Lord hath forgiven you, so you also. But above all these things, have charity, which is the bond of perfection: and let the peace of Christ rejoice in your hearts, wherein also you are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you abundantly, in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another, in psalms, hymns, and spiritual canticles, singing in grace in your hearts to God. All whatsoever you do in word or in work, all things, do ye in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God and the Father through Jesus Christ our Lord.



*Why does St. Paul call charity the bond of perfection?*

Because charity comprises in itself and links all the virtues in which perfection consists. For whoever truly loves God and his neighbor, is also good, merciful, humble, modest, patiently bears the weakness of his neighbor, willingly forgives offences, in a word, practices all virtues for the sake of charity.

*When does the peace of God rejoice in our hearts?*

When we have learned to conquer our evil inclinations, passions, and desires, and have placed order and quiet in our hearts instead. This peace then, like a queen, keeps all the wishes of the soul in harmony, and causes us to enjoy constant peace with our neighbor, and thus serve Christ in concord, as the members of one body serve the head. The best means of preserving this peace are earnest attention to the word of God, mutual imparting of pious exhortations and admonitions, and by singing hymns, psalms, and spiritual canticles.

*Why should we do all in the name of Jesus?*

Because only then can our works have real worth in the sight of God, and be pleasing to Him, when they are performed for love of Jesus, in His honor, in accordance with His spirit and will. Therefore the apostle admonishes us to do all things, eat, drink, sleep, work &c. in the name of Jesus, and so honor God, the Heavenly Father, and show our gratitude to Him. Oh, how grieved will they be on their death-bed who have neglected to offer God their daily work by a good intention, then they will see, when too late, how deficient they are in meritorious deeds. On the contrary they will rejoice whose consciences testify, that in all their actions they had in view only the will and the honor of God! Would that this might be taken to heart especially by those who have to earn their bread with difficulty and in distress, that they might always unite their hardships and trials with the sufferings and merits of Jesus, offering them to the Heavenly Father, and thus imitating Christ who had no other motive than the will and the glory of His Heavenly Father.

ASPIRATION. O God of love, of patience, and of mercy, turn our hearts to the sincere love of our neighbor, and grant, that whatever we do in thoughts, words and actions, we may do in the name of our



Lord Jesus Christ, and through Him render thanks to Thee.

### ON CHURCH SINGING.

*"Admonish one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual canticles, singing in grace in your hearts to God."*  
(Col. iii. 16.)

**T**HE custom of singing in the Church-choir\* has its foundation as far back as the Old Testament, when, by the arrangement of David, Solomon, and Ezechias, the psalms and other sacred canticles were sung by the priests and Levites. This custom the Catholic Church has retained, according to the precepts of the apostles, (i. Cor. xiv. 26; Eph. v. 19.) and the example of Jesus who, after they had eaten the pasch, intoned a hymn of praise with His apostles, (Matt. xxvi. 30) that Christians on earth, like the angels and saints in heaven, (Apoc. v. 8. 9., xiv. 3.) who unceasingly sing His praises, might at certain hours of the day, at least, give praise and thanks to God. In the earliest ages of the Church, the Christians sang hymns of praise and thanksgiving during the holy Sacrifice and other devotional services, often continuing them throughout the whole night; in which case the choir-singers probably were bound to keep the singing in proper order and agreement. In the course of time this custom of all the faithful present singing together ceased in many churches, and became confined to the choir, which was accompanied later by instruments in accordance with the words of David who calls to the praise of the Lord with trumpets, with timbrels, with pleasant psaltery and harps. (Ps. cl. 3. 4., lxxx. 3. 4.) In many churches, where the faithful still sing in concert, if done with pure hearts and true devotion, it is as St. Basil says, "a heavenly occupation, a spiritual burnt offering; it enlightens the spirit, raises it towards heaven, leads man to communion with God, makes the soul rejoice, ends idle talk, puts away laughter, reminds us of the judgment, reconciles enemies. Where the singing of songs resounds from the contrite heart, there God with the angels is present."

GOSPEL. (Matt. xiii. 24—30.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke this parable to the multitudes: The kingdom of

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\* The choir is usually a gallery in the Church in which the singers are stationed; the place where the clergy sing or recite their office, is also called the choir.





heaven is likened to a man that sowed good seed in his field. But while men were asleep, his enemy came, and oversowed cockle among the wheat, and went his way. And when the blade was sprung up, and had brought forth fruit, then appeared also the cockle. And the servants of the good man of the house coming, said to him: Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? whence, then, hath it cockle? And he said to them: An enemy hath done this. And the servants said to him: Wilt thou that we go and gather it up? And he said: No, lest perhaps, gather-



ing up the cockle, you root up the wheat also together with it. Suffer both to grow until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers: Gather up first the cockle, and bind it into bundles to burn, but the wheat gather ye into my barn.

*What is understood by the kingdom of heaven?*

The Church of God, or the collection of all orthodox Christians on earth, destined for heaven.

*What is meant by the good seed, and by the cockle?*

The good seed, as Christ Himself says, (*Matt.* xiii. 38.) signifies the children of the kingdom, that is, the true Christians, the living members of the Church, who being converted by the word of God sown into their hearts become children of God, and bring forth the fruit of good works. The cockle means the children of iniquity, of the devil, that is, those who do evil; also every wrong, false doctrine which leads men to evil.

*Who sows the good seed?*

The good seed is sown by Jesus, the Son of Man not only directly, but through His apostles, and the priests, their successors; the evil seed is sown by the devil, or by wicked men whom he uses as his tools.

*Who are the men who were asleep?*

Those superiors in the Church, those bishops and pastors who take no care of their flock, and do not warn them against seduction, when the devil comes and by wicked men sows the cockle of erroneous doctrine and of crime; and those men who are careless and neglect to hear the word of God and the sacrifice of the Mass, who neglect to pray, and do not receive the Sacraments. In the souls of such the devil sows the seeds of bad thoughts, evil imaginations and desires, from which spring, later, the cockle of pride, impurity, anger, envy, avarice, &c.

*Why does not God allow the cockle, that is, the wicked people, to be rooted out and destroyed?*

Because of His patience and long suffering towards the sinner to whom He gives time for repentance, and because of His love for the just from whom He would not, by weeding out the unjust, take away the occasion of practicing virtue and gathering up merits for themselves; for be-



cause of the unjust, the just have numerous opportunities to exercise patience, humility, &c.

*When is the time of the harvest?*

The day of the last judgment when the reapers, that is, the angels, will go out and separate the wicked from the just, and throw the wicked into the fiery furnace, while the just will be taken into everlasting joy. (*Matt. xiii. 29.*)

PRAYER. O faithful Jesus, Thou great lover of our souls, who hast sown the good seed of Thy Divine Word in our hearts, grant that it may be productive, and bear in us fruit for eternal life; protect us from our evil enemy, that he may not sow his erroneous and false doctrine in our hearts, and corrupt the good; preserve us from the sleep of sin, and sloth that we may remain always vigilant and armed against the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, overcome them manfully, and die a happy death. Amen.

## ON INCLINATION TO EVIL.

*Whence then hath it cockle?* (*Matt. xiii. 27.*)

*Whence comes the inclination to evil in man?*

**I**T is the sad consequence of original sin, that is, of that sin which our first parents, by their disobedience, committed in paradise, and which we as their descendants have inherited. This inclination to evil remains even in those who have been baptized, although original sin with its guilt and eternal punishment is taken away in baptism, but it is no sin so long as man does not voluntarily yield. (*Cat. Rom. Part. ii. 2. §. 43.*)

*Why, the sin being removed, does the inclination remain?*

To humble us that we may know our frailty and misery, and have recourse to God, our best and most powerful Father, as did St. Paul, when he was much annoyed by the devil of the flesh; (*ii. Cor. xii. 7. 8.*) that the glory of God and the power of Christ should be manifested in us, which except for our weakness could not be; that we might have occasion to fight and to conquer. A soldier



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cannot battle without opposition, nor win victory and the crown without a contest. Nor can we win the heavenly crown, if no occasion is given us, by temptations, for fight and for victory. "That which tries the combatant," says St. Bernard, "crowns the conqueror." Finally, the inclination remains, that we may learn to endure, in all meekness, the faults and infirmities of others and to watch ourselves, lest we fall into the same temptations.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

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*[For the Introit of this day's Mass see the Introit of the third Sunday after Epiphany.]*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that ever fixing our thoughts on such things as are reasonable, we may both in our words and works do what is pleasing in Thy sight. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

EPISTLE. (i. *Thess.* i. 2—10.) BRETHREN, we give thanks to God for you all, making a remembrance of you in our prayers without ceasing; being mindful of the work of your faith, and labor, and charity, and of the enduring of the hope of our Lord Jesus Christ before God and our Father: knowing, brethren, beloved of God, your election: for our gospel hath not been unto you in word only, but in power also, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much fulness, as you know what manner of men we have been among you for your sakes. And you became followers of us and of the Lord, receiving the word in much tribulation, with joy of the Holy Ghost: so that you were made a pattern to all that believe, in Macedonia and in Achaia. For from you was spread abroad the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and in Achaia, but also in every place, your faith, which is towards God, is gone forth; so that we need not to speak anything. For



they themselves relate of us what manner of entering in we had unto you; and how ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven (whom he raised from the dead), Jesus, who hath delivered us from the wrath to come.

EXPLANATION. The apostle gives thanks to God in prayer for those inhabitants of Thessalonica, who have been converted to Christianity by his words, and declares to them his joy at their Christian life which they prove by their good works and their perseverance, even through all trials, in expectation of eternal reward through Christ. He assures them also of their salvation, (election) because God had caused the preaching of His gospel, which they so willingly received, to produce in them such extraordinary fruit. He praises them not only for having listened to the gospel and abandoned idolatry, but for having regulated their lives in accordance with the faith, and having become a model to distant nations, for the report of their faith had spread far, and everywhere their zealous reception of the gospel was spoken of. Would that the same could be said of all Christians!

GOSPEL. (*Matt. xiii. 31—35.*) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke this parable to the multitudes: The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: which is the least indeed of all seeds; but when it is grown up, it is greater than all herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come, and dwell in the branches thereof. Another parable he spoke to them: The kingdom of heaven is like to leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened. All these things Jesus spoke in parables to the multitude, and without parables he did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world.

*What is here understood by the kingdom of heaven?*

The Church and the doctrine of Christ.





*Why is the Church compared to a grain of mustard-seed?*

Because there is a great similarity between them. The mustard-seed, though so small, grows in Palestine so high and so rapidly, that it becomes a broad tree, in which birds can build their nests. In like manner the Church of Christ was in the beginning very small like the mustard-seed, but it soon spread so wide that numberless people, even great philosophers and princes, came to find peace and protection under its branches.

*Why is Christ's doctrine compared to leaven?*

Because like the leaven, which quickly penetrates the flour, and makes it palatable bread, the doctrine of Christ,



spreading with surprising swiftness over the then known parts of the globe, gave the Gentiles a taste for divine things and for heavenly wisdom. Thus Christ's doctrine penetrates him who receives it, sanctifies all his thoughts, words, and deeds, and makes him pleasing to God.

*By what means, in particular, was the Church of Christ propagated?*

By the omnipotence of God and the miracles which He so frequently wrought to prove the truth and divinity of the Christian religion; the courageous faith, and the pure, moral life of the early Christians, which led many pagan minds to accept the doctrine of Christ; and the persecution of Christianity, for, as Tertullian says: "The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church." The false doctrine of Mahomet, the erroneous teachings of Luther, Calvin, and earlier and later heretics have, it is true, also spread quickly far and wide; but this is not to be wondered at, for it is easy to lead people to a doctrine that encourages sensuality, and to which they are carried by their evil inclinations, as was the case with the doctrine of the impostor Mahomet, and three hundred years ago with the heresy of Luther; but to spread a doctrine which demands the subduing of the carnal, earthly inclinations, and to bend the will to the yoke of obedience to faith, something more than human eloquence is required. Thus, the Chancellor of England, Thomas More, who gave his blood for the true doctrine of Christ, wrote to Luther, who was boasting of the rapid increase of his sect: "It is easy to descend; seducing the people to a bad life is nothing more marvellous than that a heavy stone should fall of its own accord to the ground;" and Melancthon, a friend of Luther, in answer to his mother's question, whether she should remain a Catholic or receive Luther's doctrine, wrote: "In this religion it is easy to live, in the Catholic it is easy to die."

*Why did Christ always speak in parables?*

That His teaching by being simple might be more easily understood, and better remembered. He who is called upon to teach others, should, as did Christ, always speak to them according to their ability to understand, and by no means seek his own honor, but the honor of God, and the benefit of those who hear him.

PRAYER. O most benign Jesus! How much do we give Thee thanks that Thou hast permitted us



to be born in Thy holy Church, and instructed in Thy holy doctrine, which, like the mustard-seed, has grown to be a large tree, spreading over the whole earth. Grant that under the shadow of this tree, in Thy holy Church, we may ever rest securely, cling to her faithfully, and penetrated, as by leaven, with her doctrine may bring Thee pleasing fruits of faith and virtue. Amen.

## INSTRUCTION ON SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.



*Why is this Sunday called "Septuagesima?"*  
**B**ECAUSE in accordance with the words of the First Council of Orleans, some pious Christian congregations in the earliest ages of the Church, especially the clergy, began to fast seventy days before Easter, on this Sunday, which was therefore called "Septuagesima" — the seventieth day. The same is the case with the Sundays following, which are called Sexagesima, Quinquagesima, Quadragesima, because some Christians commenced to fast sixty days, others fifty, others forty days before Easter, until finally, to make it properly uniform, Popes Gregory and Gelasius arranged that all Christians should fast forty days before Easter, commencing with Ash-Wednesday.

*Why, from this day until Easter, does the Church omit in her service all joyful canticles, alleluias, and the Gloria in excelsis &c?*

Gradually to prepare the minds of the faithful for the serious time of penance and sorrow; to remind the sinner of the grievousness of his errors, and to exhort him to penance. So the priest appears at the altar in violet, the color of penance, and the front of the altar is covered with a violet curtain. To arouse our sorrow for our sins, and show the need of repentance, the Church in the name of all mankind at the Introit cries with David: The groans of death surrounded me, the sorrows of hell encompassed me: and in my affliction I called upon the Lord, and he heard my voice from his holy temple.



(*Ps.* xvii. 5—7.) I will love thee, O Lord, my strength; the Lord is my firmament, and my refuge, and my deliverer. (*Ps.* xvii. 2—3.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O Lord, we beseech Thee graciously hear the prayers of Thy people; that we who are justly afflicted for our sins may, for the glory of Thy name, mercifully be delivered. Through our Lord, Jesus Christ &c.

EPISTLE. (i. *Cor.* ix. 24—27., to x. 1—5.) BRETHREN, know you not that they that run in the race, all run indeed, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that you may obtain. And every one that striveth for the mastery, refraineth himself from all things: and they indeed that they may receive a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible one. I therefore so run, not as at an uncertainty; I so fight, not as one beating the air; but I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection; lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway. For I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea: and all in Moses were baptized, in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink (and they drank of the spiritual rock that followed them: and the rock was Christ); but with the most of them God was not well pleased.

EXPLANATION. Having exhorted us to penance in the Introit of the Mass, the Church desires to indicate to us, by reading this epistle, the effort we should make to reach the kingdom of heaven by the narrow path (*Matt.* vii. 13.) of penance and mortification. This St. Paul illustrates by three different examples. By the example of those who in a race run to one point, or in a prize-fight practice and prepare themselves for the victor's reward by the strongest exercise, and by the strictest abstinence from everything that might weaken the physical powers. If to win a laurel-crown that passes away, these will subject themselves to the severest trials and deprivations, how much more should we, for the sake of the heavenly crown of eternal happiness,



abstain from those improper desires, by which the soul is weakened, and practice those holy virtues, such as prayer, love of God and our neighbor, patience, to which the crown is promised! Next, by his own example, bringing himself before them as one running a race, and fighting for an eternal crown, but not as one running blindly not knowing whither, or fighting as one who strikes not his antagonist, but the air; on the contrary, with his eyes firmly fixed on the eternal crown, certain to be his who lives by the precepts of the gospel, who chastises his spirit and his body as a valiant champion, with a strong hand, that is, by severest mortification, by fasting and prayer. If St. Paul, notwithstanding the extraordinary graces which he received, thought it necessary to chastise his body that he might not be cast away, how does the sinner expect to be saved, living an effeminate and luxurious life without penance and mortification? St. Paul's third example is that of the Jews who all perished on their journey to the Promised Land, even though God had granted them so many graces; He shielded them from their enemies by a cloud which served as a light to them at night, and a cooling shade by day; He divided the waters of the sea, thus preparing for them a dry passage; He caused manna to fall from heaven to be their food, and water to gush from the rock for their drink. These temporal benefits which God bestowed upon the Jews in the wilderness had a spiritual meaning; the cloud and the sea was a figure of baptism which enlightens the soul, tames the concupiscence of the flesh, and purifies from sin; the manna was a type of the most holy Sacrament of the Altar, the soul's true bread from heaven; the water from the rock, the blood flowing from Christ's wound in the side; and yet with all these temporal benefits which God bestowed upon them, and with all the spiritual graces they were to receive by faith from the coming Redeemer, of the six hundred thousand men who left Egypt, only two, Joshua and Caleb, entered the Promised Land. Why? Because they were fickle, murmured so often against God, and desired the pleasures of the flesh. How much, then, have we need to fear lest we be excluded from the true, happy land, Heaven, if we do not continuously struggle for it, by penance and mortification!

ASPIRATION. Assist me, O Jesus, with Thy grace that, following St. Paul's example, I may be anxious, by the constant pious practice of virtue and prayer, to arrive at perfection and to enter heaven.





GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xx. 1—16.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke to his disciples this parable: The kingdom of heaven is like to a householder, who went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. And having agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And going out about the third hour, he saw others standing in the marketplace idle, and he said to them: Go you also into my vineyard, and I will give you what shall be just. And they went their way. And again he went out



about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did in like manner. But about the eleventh hour, he went out, and found others standing; and he saith to them: Why stand you here all the day idle? They say to him: Because no man hath hired us. He saith to them: Go you also into my vineyard. And when evening was come, the Lord of the vineyard saith to his steward: Call the laborers, and pay them their hire, beginning from the last even to the first. When therefore they were come that came about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first also came, they thought that they should receive more; and they also received every man a penny. And receiving it, they murmured against the master of the house, saying: These last have worked but one hour, and thou hast made them equal to us that have borne the burden of the day and the heats. But he answering said to one of them: Friend, I do thee no wrong; didst thou not agree with me for a penny? Take what is thine, and go thy way: I will also give to this last even as to thee. Or, is it not lawful for me to do what I will? Is thy eye evil, because I am good? So shall the last be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few are chosen.

*In this parable, what is to be understood by the householder, the vineyard, the laborers, and the penny?*

The householder represents God, who in different ages of the world, in the days of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and finally, in the days of Christ and the apostles, has sought to call men as workmen into His vineyard, the true Church, that they might labor there industriously, and receive the penny of eternal glory.

*How and when does God call people?*

By inward inspiration, by preachers, confessors, spiritual books, and conversations, &c., in flourishing youth and in advanced age, which periods of life may be understood by the different hours of the day.



*What is meant by working in the vineyard?*

It means laboring, fighting, suffering for God and His honor, for our own and the salvation of others. As in a vineyard we spade, dig, root out weeds, cut off all that is useless and noxious, manure, plant, and bind up, so in the spiritual vineyard of our soul we must, by frequent meditation on death and hell, by examination of conscience dig up the evil inclinations by their roots, and by true repentance eradicate the weeds of vice, and by mortification, especially by prayer and fasting cut away concupiscence; by the recollection of our sins we must humble ourselves, and amend our life; in place of the bad habits we must plant the opposite virtues and bind our unsteady will to the trellis of the fear of God and of His judgment, that we may continue firm.

*How is a vice or bad habit to be rooted up?*

A great hatred of sin must be aroused; a fervent desire of destroying sin must be produced in our hearts; the grace of God must be implored without which nothing can be accomplished. It is useful also to read some spiritual book which speaks against the vice. The Sacraments of Penance and of holy Communion should often be received, and some saint who in life had committed the same sin, and afterwards by the grace of God conquered it, should be honored, as Mary Magdalen and St. Augustine who each had the habit of impurity, but with the help of God resisted and destroyed it in themselves; there should be fasting, alms-deeds, or other good works, performed for the same object, and it is of great importance, even necessary, that the conscience should be carefully examined in this regard.

*Who are standing idle in the market-place?*

In the market-place, that is the world, they are standing idle who, however much business they attend to, do not work for God and for their own salvation; for the only necessary employment is the service of God and the working out of our salvation. There are three ways of being idle: doing nothing whatever; doing evil; doing other things than the duties of our position in life and its office require, or if this work is done without a good intention, or not from the love of God. This threefold idleness deprives us of our salvation, as the servant loses his wages if he works not at all, or not according to the will of his master. We are all servants of God, and none of us can say with



the laborers in the vineyard that no man has employed us; for God, when He created us, hired us at great wages, and we must serve Him always, as He cares for us at all times; and if, in the gospel, the householder reproaches the workmen, whom no man had hired, for their idleness, what will God one day say to those Christians whom He has placed to work in His vineyard, the Church, if they have remained idle?

*Why do the last comers receive as much as those who worked all day?*

Because God rewards not the time or length of the work, but the industry and diligence with which it has been performed. It may indeed happen that many a one who has served God but for a short time, excels in merits another who has lived long, but has not labored as diligently. (*Wisd. iv. 8—13.*)

*What is signified by the murmurs of the first workmen when the wages were paid?*

As the Jews were the first who were called by God, Christ intended to show that the Gentiles, who were called last, should one day receive the heavenly reward, and that the Jews have no reason to murmur, because God acted not unjustly in fulfilling His promises to them, and at the same time calling others to the eternal reward. In heaven envy, malevolence and murmuring will find no place. On the contrary, the saints who have long served God wonder at His goodness in converting sinners, and those who have served Him but a short time, for these also there will be the same penny, that is, the vision, the enjoyment, and possession of God and His kingdom. Only in the heavenly glory there will be a difference, because the divine lips have assured us that each one shall be rewarded according to his works. The murmurs of the workmen and the answer of the householder serve to teach us, that we should not murmur against the merciful proceedings of God towards our neighbor, nor envy him; for envy and jealousy are abominable, devilish vices, hated by God. By the envy of the devil, death came into the world. (*Wisd. ii. 24.*) The envious, therefore, imitate Lucifer, but they hurt only themselves, because they are consumed by their envy. "Envy," says St. Basil, "is an institution of the serpent, an invention of the devils, an obstacle to piety, a road to hell, the depriver of the heavenly kingdom."



*What is meant by: The first shall be last, and the last shall be first?*

This again is properly to be understood of the Jews; for they were the first called, but will be the last in order, as in time, because they responded not to Christ's invitation, received not His doctrine, and will enter the Church only at the end of the world; while, on the contrary, the Gentiles who were not called until after the Jews, will be the first in number as in merit, because the greater part responded and are still responding to the call. Christ, indeed, called all the Jews, but few of them answered, therefore few were chosen. Would that this might not also come true with regard to Christians whom God has also called, and whom He wishes to save. (i. *Tim.* ii. 4.) Alas! very few live in accordance with their vocation of working in the vineyard of the Lord, and, consequently, do not receive the penny of eternal bliss.

PRAYER. O most benign God, who, out of pure grace, without any merit of ours, hast called us, Thy unworthy servants, to the true faith, into the vineyard of the holy Catholic Church, and dost require us to work in it for the sanctification of our souls, grant, we beseech Thee, that we may never be idle but be found always faithful workmen, and that that which in past years we have failed to do, we may make up for in future by greater zeal and persevering industry, and, the work being done, may receive the promised reward in heaven, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son our Lord. Amen.

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## INSTRUCTION ON SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.



IN the Introit of this day's Mass, the Church brings before us one who seeks to be loosed from his sins, and calls on God for help and assistance. Arise, why sleepest thou, O Lord? arise, and cast us not off to the end: why turnest thou thy face away, and forgettest our trouble? Our belly hath cleaved to the earth: arise, O Lord, help us and deliver us. O God, we have heard with our ears; our Fathers have declared to us. (*Ps. xliii. 23. 25.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who seest that we trust not in aught we do; mercifully grant that by the protection of the Doctor of the Gentiles we may be defended against all adversities. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

EPISTLE. (*ii. Cor. xi. 19—33; to xii. 1—9.*) BRETHREN, you gladly suffer the foolish; whereas yourselves are wise. For you suffer if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take from you, if a man be lifted up, if a man strike you on the face. I speak according to dishonor, as if we had been weak in this part. Wherein if any man dare (I speak foolishly), I dare also. Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they the ministers of Christ (I speak as one less wise,) I am more: in many more labors, in prisons more frequently, in stripes above measure, in deaths often. Of the Jews five times did I receive forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods; once was I stoned; thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day I was in the depth of the sea. In journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils from my own nation, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness,



in perils in the sea, in perils from false brethren. In labor and painfulness, in much watchings, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness; besides those things which are without, my daily instance, the solicitude for all the Churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalized, and I am not on fire? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things that concern my infirmity. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knoweth that I lie not. At Damascus, the governor of the nation under Aretas the king, guarded the city of the Damascenes to apprehend me; and through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and so escaped his hands. If I must glory (it is not expedient indeed); but I will come to the visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body I know not, or out of the body, I know not, God knoweth): such an one rapt even to the third heaven. And I know such a man (whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth): that he was caught up into paradise; and heard secret words, which it is not granted to man to utter. For such an one I will glory; but for myself I will glory nothing, but in my infirmities. For though I should have a mind to glory, I shall not be foolish; for I will say the truth. But I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth in me, or anything he heareth from me. And lest the greatness of the revelations should exalt me, there was given me a sting of my flesh, an angel of Satan, to buffet me. For, which thing thrice I besought the Lord, that it might depart from me. And he said to me: My grace is sufficient for thee; for power is made perfect in infirmity. Gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me.



*Why is St. Paul mentioned in the Mass of this day, and why is this epistle read?*

Because in Rome the Station or Church service is held on this day in the Church of St. Paul and because the Church continues to encourage us to work according to the example given by St. Paul who, with the grace of God, accomplished and suffered so much; also because we should labor for the honor of God and the salvation of our souls and faithfully coöperate with the grace of God.

*Why, in the beginning of this epistle, does St. Paul say so much in his own praise?*

Not out of ambition for honor and glory, but to honor God, and for the love and advantage of the Corinthians, who allowed themselves to be deceived by mercenary impostors and false prophets; that he might make public the craftiness of those deceivers who assumed the appearance of the true apostles, as Satan took the form of a good angel. To shame these, and to remove the obstacles they had placed in the way of the gospel, St. Paul was obliged to reveal to the Corinthians the things he had performed and endured in propagating the holy gospel. — By trials and sufferings is the true apostle known; the false apostles, the hirelings, as Christ calls them, only care for their own bodies, for temporal advantages, not for the salvation of souls. We see this exemplified in our days by the heretical missionaries who, when there is suffering, when there is martyrdom, take to flight, for their eyes are directed only to the present life and a large income, while the Catholic missionaries rejoice if, for Christ's sake, and for the salvation of souls, they are permitted to suffer, and made worthy to endure the cruel death of the martyr.

*Of whom does St. Paul relate such marvels?*

Of himself, but from humility and modesty he does not say so; fourteen years before, forty-four years after the birth of Christ, St. Paul was rapt to the third heaven, that is, to the abode of happy spirits; but to preserve him in humility God permitted Satan to use the concupiscence of the flesh, which is like a sting in the body of man, as a temptation to the apostle, and by which he was continually tormented.

ASPIRATION. Grant me, O God, thy grace that in these evil days of false doctrines I may remain stead-





fast to Thy holy gospel which in the holy Catholic Church remains pure and unchanged; never let me be deterred from obeying its precepts, neither by the charms of the world nor by the mockery and reproaches of the wicked.

GOSPEL. (*Luke viii. 4—15.*) AT THAT TIME, when a very great multitude was gathered together and hastened out of the cities unto him, he spoke by a similitude: The sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was



trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And other some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And other some fell among thorns; and the thorns growing up with it, choked it. And other some fell upon good ground; and being sprung up, yielded fruit a hundredfold. Saying these things, he cried out: He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And his disciples asked him what this parable might be. To whom he said: To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God, but to the rest in parables; that seeing, they may not see, and hearing, they may not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. And they by the way-side are they that hear: then the devil cometh, and taketh the word out of their heart, lest believing they should be saved. Now they upon the rock are they who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no roots, for they believe for a while, and in time of temptation they fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they who have heard, and going their way, are choked with the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and yield no fruit. But that on the good ground are they who, in a good and perfect heart, hearing the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit in patience.

*Why is the word of God compared to a seed?*

Because from the word of God germinates the fruit of good works, as from good seed grows good fruit; as it is impossible, therefore, for an unsowed field to produce good fruit, so is it impossible for man without the seed of God's word to produce good fruits of the spirit.

*Why does Christ cry out in the parable: He that hath ears to hear, let him hear?*

Because of the importance and necessity of the doctrine which was contained in the parable. For to hear the word



of God is absolutely necessary for salvation, as the Apostle indicates: How shall they believe him (Jesus) of whom they have not heard? (*Rom. x. 14.*) Jesus calls those happy who hear the word of God and keep it. (*Luke xi. 28.*) And on this subject St. Augustine says: "Be assured, my brethren, that as the body becomes weakened by want and hunger, and wastes to a mere shadow, so the soul that is not nourished by the word of God, becomes shrunken, worthless and unfit for any good work."

*Whence comes so much cockle of evil, when the seed of God's word is so abundantly sowed?*

Because, as Christ says, the seed falls now by the wayside, now upon a rock, now among thorns, seldom upon good soil, that is to say, those who hear the word of God are as a highway, over which many distracting thoughts are traveling which tread down the scattered seed, or, like fowls of the air devour it; they are like rocks, hardened by their prejudices or repeated crimes, so that the divine word cannot take root; again, they are so overgrown by the thorns of worldly cares, the constant desire for wealth and riches, and sensual delights, that even if they receive the seed, it is unable to grow and bear fruit.

## ON THE POWER OF GOD'S WORD.

**T**HE word of God is compared, by the Prophet Jeremias, to a hammer which crushes hearts as hard as rocks, and to a fire that dries up the swamps of vice, and consumes inveterate evil habits. (*Jer. xxiii. 29.*) The Psalmist compares it to thunder that makes all tremble, a storm-wind that bends and breaks the cedars of Lebanon, that is, proud and obstinate spirits; a light that dispels the darkness of ignorance; and a remedy that cures sin. (*Ps. xxviii. 3. 5., cxviii. 105.*) St. Paul compares it to a sword that divides the body from the soul, that is, the carnal desires from the spirit; (*Hebr. iv. 12.*) the Apostle James to a mirror in which man sees his stains and his wrongs. (*Jam. i. 23.*) the Prophet Isaias to a precious rain that moistens the soil of the soul and fertilizes it; (*Isai. lv. 10. 11.*) and Jesus Himself compares it to a seed that when it falls on good ground, brings forth fruit a hundredfold. (*Luke viii. 8.*) One single grain of this divine seed produced the most marvellous fruits of sanctity in St. Augustine, St. Anthony the Great, in St. Nicholas of Tolentino, and others; for St. Augustine was converted by the words: "Let us



walk honestly as in the day: not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and envy." (*Rom. xiii. 13.*) St. Anthony by the words: "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." (*Matt. xix. 21.*) Nicholas of Tolentino was brought to Christian perfection by the words: "Love not the world, nor the things which are in the world. (1. *John ii. 15.*)

*How should we prepare ourselves to be benefited by the word of God?*

We must be good, well-tilled soil, that is, we must have a heart that loves truth, desires to learn, and humbly and sincerely seeks salvation; we must listen to the word of God with due preparation and attention, keep the divine truths we have heard, in our heart, frequently consider and strive to fulfil them.

*What should be done before the sermon?*

We should endeavor to purify our conscience, for, as St. Chrysostom demands; "Who would pour precious juice into a vessel that is not clean, without first washing it?" We should, therefore, at least cleanse our hearts by an ardent sorrow for our sins, because the spirit of truth enters not into the sinful soul; (*Wisd. i. 4.*) we should ask the Holy Ghost for the necessary enlightenment, for little or no fruit can be obtained from a sermon if it is not united with prayer; we should listen to the sermon with a good motive; that is, with a view of hearing something edifying and instructive; if we attend only through curiosity, the desire to hear something new, to criticize the preacher, or to see and to be seen, we are like the Pharisees who for such and similar motives went to hear Christ and derived no benefit therefrom. "As a straight sword goes not into a crooked sheath, so the word of God enters not into a heart that is filled with improper motives." We should strive to direct our minds rightly, that is, to dispel all temporal thoughts, all needless distraction, otherwise the wholesome words would fall but upon the ears, would not penetrate the heart, and the words of Christ be fulfilled: They have ears, and hear not.

*How should we comport ourselves during the sermon?*

We should listen to the sermon with earnest, reverent attention, for God speaks to us through His priests, and



Christ says to them: Who hears you, hears me. (*Luke* x. 16.) We must listen to the priests, therefore, not as to men, but as to God's ambassadors, for every priest can say with St. Paul: We are ambassadors for Christ, God, as it were, exhorting by us. (ii. *Cor.* v. 20.) "If," says St. Chrysostom, "when the letter of a king is read, the greatest quiet and attention prevails, that nothing may be lost, how much more should we listen with reverence and perfect silence to the word of God?" The word of God is, and ever will be, a divine seed, which, when properly received, produces precious fruit, by what priest soever sowed; for in the sowing it matters not what priest sows, but what soil is sowed. Be careful, also, that you do not apply that which is said to others, but take it to yourself, or the sermon will be of no benefit to you. Are you free from those vices which the preacher decries and against which he battles? then, thank God, but do not despise others who are perhaps laboring under them, rather pray that they may be released and you preserved from falling into them. Keep also from sleeping, talking, and other distractions, and remember, that whoever is of God, also willingly hears his word. (*John* viii. 47.)

*What should be done after the sermon?*

We should then strive to put into practice the good we have heard, for God justifies not those who hear the law, but those who keep it, (*Rom.* ii. 13.) and those who hear the word of God and do not conform their lives to it, are like the man who looks into the mirror, and having looked into it goes away, and presently forgets what manner of man he is. (*Jam.* i. 23. 24.) To practice that which has been heard, it is above all necessary that it should be kept constantly in mind, and thoughtfully considered. St. Bernard says: "Preserve the word of God as you would meat for your body, for it is a life-giving bread, and the food of your soul. Happy those, says Christ, who keep it. Receive it, therefore, into your soul's interior, and let it reach your morals and your actions."

That food which cannot be digested, or is at once thrown out, is useless; the food should be well masticated, retained, and by the digestive powers worked up into good blood. So not only on the day, but often during the week, that which was heard in the sermon should be thought of and put into practice. Speak of it to others, thus will much idle talk be saved, many souls with the grace of God roused to good, and enlightened in regard to the evil they



had not before seen in themselves and in future will avoid. Let us listen to others when they repeat what was said in the sermon. Heads of families should require their children and domestics to relate what they have heard preached. Let us also entreat God to give us grace that we may be enabled to practice the precepts given us.

PRAYER. How much am I shamed, O my God, that the seed of Thy Divine word, which Thou hast sowed so often and so abundantly in my heart, has brought forth so little fruit! Ah! have mercy on me, and so change my heart, that it may become good soil, in which Thy word may take root, grow without hinderance, and finally bring forth fruits of salvation. Amen.

## INSTRUCTION ON QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.



THE Introit of this day's Mass is the sigh of an afflicted soul confiding in God: Be thou unto me a God, a protector, and a place of refuge, to save me: for thou art my strength and my refuge: and for thy name's sake thou wilt be my leader, and wilt nourish me. (*Ps.* xxx. 3. 4.) In thee, O Lord, I have hoped, let me never be confounded: deliver me in thy justice, and set me free. (*Ps.* xxx. 2.)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O Lord, we beseech Thee, graciously hear our prayers, and unloosing the bonds of our sins, guard us from all adversity. Through our Lord, &c.

EPISTLE. (i. *Cor.* xiii. 1—13.) BRETHREN, if I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And if I should have prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I should have



all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity is patient, is kind: charity envieth not; dealeth not perversely; is not puffed up; is not ambitious; seeketh not her own; is not provoked to anger; thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never falleth away: whether prophecies shall be made void, or tongues shall cease, or knowledge shall be destroyed. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part: but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away the things of a child. We see now through a glass in a dark manner; but then face to face. Now I know in part; but then I shall know even as I am known. And now there remain faith, hope, charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity.

EXPLANATION. In this epistle St. Paul speaks of the necessity, the excellence and the nature of true charity. He says that all natural and supernatural gifts, all good works, even martyrdom, cannot save us if we have not charity; because love alone can render our works pleasing to God. Without charity, therefore, though ever so many prayers be recited, fasts observed, and good deeds performed, nothing will be acceptable to God, or merit eternal life. Strive then, O Christian soul, to lead a pious life in love, and to remain always in the state of grace.

*Can faith alone, as the so-called Reformers assert, render man just and save him?*

Faith alone, however strong, though it could move mountains, without love, that is, without good works performed for love of God and our neighbor, can never justify or save us. For, when St. Paul says, that man is justified by faith without works, (*Rom. iii. 28.; xi. 6.; Eph. ii. 8. 9.*)



he means to refer to those works which were performed by command of the law of Moses, and which, as they were external and without true charity, were of no avail; he did not refer to those works which are performed in a state of grace with a lively, love-inspired faith. Therefore the same Apostle writes to the Galatians: (*Gal. v. 6.*) Faith only availeth which worketh by charity; to Titus: (*Tit. iii. 8.*) It is a faithful saying: and these things I will have thee affirm constantly: that they who believe in God, may be careful to excel in good works. These things are good and profitable unto men; and he exhorts the Colossians (*Colos. i. 10.*) to be fruitful in every good work. St. James confirms the same by saying: (*James ii. 17. 24.*) So faith if it have not works, is dead in itself; by works man is justified and not by faith only. That this is the true doctrine of Christ is evident from His own words, when He says: "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire." (*Matt. vii. 19.*) At the day of judgment Christ will demand good works from all men, (*Matt. xxv. 35.*) and will not judge them only according to their faith, but by their good works, which true faith must always produce: (*Apoc. xx. 12.*) Would Christ and His apostles demand good works, if faith alone be sufficient? "The devils also believe and tremble," (*James ii. 19.*) they believe, but they are not saved, and their faith but increases their torments. Therefore, the assertion that faith without good works is sufficient for justification and salvation, is plainly against the doctrine of Christ and His Church, and must of necessity lead man to vice and misery, as shown by the history of the unhappy separation of the sixteenth century.

*Are good works available which are performed in the state of mortal sin?*

Good works performed while in a state of mortal sin avail nothing in regard to eternal life, writes St. Lawrence Justinian, but aid in moderating the punishment imposed for disobedience and the transgression of God's commandments. They bring temporal goods, such as honor, long life, health, earthly happiness, &c.; they prevent us from falling deeper into sin, and prepare the heart for the reception of grace; so the pious Gerson writes: "Do as much good as you can, even though in the state of mortal sin, that God may give light to your heart."

ASPIRATION. O God of love, pour the spirit of true charity into my heart that, according to the



spirit of St. Paul, I may endeavor to be always in a state of grace, that all my works may be pleasing to Thee, and meritorious for me.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xviii. 31—43.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus took unto him the twelve, and said to them:



Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things shall be accomplished which were written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man. For he shall be delivered to the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and scourged, and spit upon; and after they have scourged him,



they will put him to death; and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things, and this word was hid from them, and they understood not the things that were said. Now it came to pass, when he drew nigh to Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the way-side, begging. And when he heard the multitude passing by, he asked what this meant. And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out, saying: Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me. And they that went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace. But he cried out much more: Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus standing, commanded him to be brought unto him. And when he was come near, he asked him, saying: What wilt thou that I do to thee? But he said: Lord, that I may see. And Jesus said to him: Receive thy sight; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he saw, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

*Why did Christ so often foretell His passion to His disciples?*

Because He wanted to show how great was His desire to suffer for us, for we speak often of that which we crave; and because He wished His disciples when they should see Him treated as a criminal and martyred, not to think evil of Him, or imagine themselves deceived, but remember that He had foretold all minutely, that all happened of His own will.

*Did not the disciples understand anything of what He predicted in regard to His future sufferings?*

They may, certainly, have well understood He was to suffer, for which reason Peter tried to dissuade Him from it; (*Matt.* xvi. 22.) but they did not comprehend why or for what He would suffer, or how He would rise again. All this the Holy Ghost gave them to understand, after it had come to pass. (*John* xiv. 26.) The light of the Holy Ghost is of so much value, that without it even the clearest doctrines of faith are not understood.



*Why does Christ so often call Himself the Son of Man?*

He wished to show, in the Jewish way of speaking, He was also man, a descendant of Adam, and that we should be humble, and not seek or desire high titles.

*Why did the blind man call Christ the Son of David?*

Because, like all the Jews, he believed that the Messiah, according to humanity, would be of the house of David, as was promised. (*Ps. cxxxi. 11.*)

*Why did Christ ask the blind man: What wilt thou that I do to thee?*

This He asked, not because He was unaware of the blind man's wish, but to enable him the better to prove his faith and hope that through Christ he would receive his sight; and to teach us how willing He is to help us, and how it pleases Him if we confidently place our wants before Him. We should learn from this blind man, who would not be restrained by the passing crowd in his ardent and reiterated request, not to pay attention, in the work we have commenced, to human respect, or human judgment, but to persevere, and not allow ourselves to be led astray by the world's mockery or contempt. We should also learn to be grateful to God, and faithfully cling to Him, if He has once opened the eyes of our mind, and healed our spiritual blindness, which is far more deplorable than physical blindness, for nothing can be more miserable than not to see and understand God, not to know what is necessary for our salvation, and what is pernicious.

*Why is this gospel read on this Sunday.*

The Church wishes to remind us of the painful passion and death of Jesus, and to move us by the contemplation of those mysteries to avoid and despise the wicked, heathenish amusements of carnival, sinful pleasures which she has always condemned, because they come from dark paganism, and, to avert the people from them, commands that during the three days of carnival the Blessed Sacrament shall be exposed for public adoration, sermons given, and the faithful exhorted to have recourse at this time to the Sacraments of Penance and the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, with the reception of which Pope Clement XIII. (*Breve, 23. June 1765*) connected a plenary indulgence. A true Catholic will conform to the desire of his holy Church, considering the words which St. Augustine



spoke, at this time, to the faithful, "The heathens (as also the wordly people of our days) shout songs of love and merriment, but you should delight in the preaching of the word of God; they rush to the dramatic plays, but you should hasten to Church; they are intoxicated, but you should fast and be sober."

PRAYER. O most benign Jesus! who didst so desire to suffer for us, grant, that we may willingly suffer for love of Thee; that we may hate and flee from the detestable pleasures of the world and the flesh, and practice penance and mortification, that by so doing we may merit to be released from our spiritual blindness to love Thee more and more ardently, and finally possess Thee forever.

## INSTRUCTION ON LENT.

### *Who instituted Lent?*

**A**CCORDING to the Fathers of the Church, Justin and Irenaeus, the fast before Easter was instituted and sanctified by Christ Himself; according to the saints Leo and Jerome, the holy apostles ordained it after the example given by Jesus.

### *Why has the Church instituted this fast forty days before Easter?*

To imitate Christ who fasted forty days; to participate in His merits and sufferings; to subject our flesh by voluntary mortification to the spirit, and to mortify our evil desires as did St. Paul; (*Col. 1. 24.*) to enable us to lead a pure life, and thus prepare for the holy festival of Easter, and the reception of the divine Lamb, Jesus; and, finally, to render God satisfaction for our sins, and do penance, as Pope Gregory says, for the sins of one whole year by one short fast, lasting only the tenth part of a year.

### *Was the fast of Lent observed in early times as in the present?*

Yes, but more strictly; for the people of the early ages not only abstained from meat, but also from all that which is connected with it, such as eggs, butter, cheese, &c., even from wine and fish, although this was not the general com-



mand of the Church; they fasted all day, and only ate in the evening after vespers, in remembrance of which, vespers are now said before dinner-time, because the Church, as a kind mother, now permits the supper to be changed into a dinner, and also allows something to be taken in the evening, that the body may not be too much weakened, and become unfit for labor.

How much does this ancient custom put to shame the Christians of to-day who think the fast in our times too severe! "But," asks St. Ambrose, "what sort of Christians are they? Christ, who never sinned fasted for our sins, and we will not fast for our own great and numerous offences?"

*How should the holy season of Lent be spent?*

As according to the teaching of St. Leo, the main thing in fasting is not that the body be deprived of food, but that the mind at the same time be withdrawn from wickedness, we should endeavor during Lent, not only to be temperate in eating and drinking, but especially to lead a modest life, sanctifying the days by persevering prayer and devoutly attending church.

**PRAYER AT THE BEGINNING OF LENT.**

Almighty God! I unite myself at the beginning of this holy season of penance with the Church militant, endeavoring to make these days of real sorrow for my sins and crucifixion of the sensual man. O Lord Jesus! in union with Thy fasting and passion, I offer Thee my fasting in obedience to the Church, for Thy honor, and in thanksgiving for the many favors I have received, in satisfaction for my sins and the sins of others, and that I may receive the grace to avoid such and such a sin, N. N. and to practice such and such a virtue, N. N.





## INSTRUCTION ON ASH-WEDNESDAY.

*Why is this day thus named?*

**B**ECAUSE on this day the Church blesses ashes, and places them on the heads of her faithful children, saying: "Remember man, thou art dust, and unto dust thou shalt return."

*Why is this done?*

St. Charles Borromeo gives us the following reasons for this practice: that the faithful may be moved to sincere humility of heart; that the heavenly blessing may descend upon them, by which they, being really penitent, will weep with their whole soul for their sins, remembering how earth was cursed because of sin, and that we have all to return to dust; that strength to do true penance may be given the body, and that our soul may be endowed with divine grace to persevere in penance.

With such thoughts let the ashes be put upon your head, while you ask in all humility and with a contrite heart, for God's mercy and grace.

*Is the practice of putting ashes upon our heads pleasing to God?*

It is, for God Himself commanded the Israelites to put ashes on their heads for a sign of repentance. (*Jer.* xxv. 34.) Thus did David (*Ps.* ci. 10.) who even strewed ashes on his bread; the Ninivites, (*Jonas* iii. 5.) Judith, (*Jud.* ix. 1.) Mardochai, (*Esth.* iv. 1.) Job, (*Job.* xlii. 6.) &c. The Christians of the earliest times followed this practice as often as they did public penance for their sins.

*Why from this day until the end of Lent are the altars draped in violet?*

Because, as has been already said, the holy season of Lent is a time of sorrow and penance for sin, and the Church desires externally to demonstrate by the violet with which she drapes the altar, by the violet vestments worn by the priests, and by the cessation of the organ and festive singing, that we in quiet mourning are bewailing our sins; and to still further impress the spirit of penance upon us, there is usually only a simple crucifix or a picture of Christ's passion, left visible upon the altar, and devoutly meditating upon it, the heart is mostly prepared for contrition.



In the Introit of this day's Mass the Church uses the following words to make known her zeal for penance, and to move God to mercy: Thou hast mercy upon all, O Lord, and hatest none of the things which Thou hast made, winking at the sins of men for the sake of repentance, and sparing them; for thou art the Lord our God. (*Wisd.* xi. 24. 25.) Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me; for my soul trusteth in thee. (*Ps.* lvi. 2.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant to thy faithful, O Lord, that they may begin the venerable solemnities of fasting with suitable piety, and perform them with tranquil devotion. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, &c.

LESSON. (*Joel* ii. 12—19.) Thus saith the Lord: Be converted to me with all your heart, in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning. And rend your hearts and not your garments, and turn to the Lord your God; for he is gracious and merciful, patient and rich in mercy, and ready to repent of the evil. Who knoweth but he will return, and forgive, and leave a blessing behind him, sacrifice and libation to the Lord your God? Blow the trumpet in Sion: sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather together the people; sanctify the Church; assemble the ancients; gather together the little ones, and them that suck at the breasts; let the bridegroom go forth from his bed, and the bride out of her bride-chamber. Between the porch and the altar the priests, the Lord's ministers, shall weep; and shall say: Spare, O Lord, spare thy people; and give not thine inheritance to reproach, that the heathens should rule over them. Why should they say among the nations: Where is their God? The Lord hath been zealous for his land, and hath spared his people. And the Lord answered, and said to his people: Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and you shall be filled with them; and I will no more make you a reproach among the nations, saith the Lord Almighty.



EXPLANATION. The Prophet Joel exhorts the Jews to sorrow and penance for their sins, that they evade the expected judgment to be sent by God upon the city of Jerusalem. He required of them to show their repentance not merely by rending their garments, a sign of mourning with the Jews, but by a truly contrite heart. The Church wishes us to see plainly from this lesson of the prophet what qualities our penance should possess, if we desire reconciliation with God, forgiveness of our sins, and deliverance at the Last Day, which qualities are not merely abstinence from food and amusements, but the practice of real mortification of our evil inclinations, thus becoming with our whole heart converted to God.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* vi. 16—21.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: When you fast, be not as the hypocrites, sad. For they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Amen I say to you, they have received their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head and wash thy face, that thou appear not to men to fast, but to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee. Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth, where the rust and moth consume, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither the rust nor moth doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also.

EXPLANATION. Jesus forbids us to seek the praises of men when performing good works, (fasting is a good work,) and still worse it would be to do good as the Pharisees, through hypocrisy. He also warns us against avarice and the desire for temporal riches, urging us to employ our temporal goods, in giving alms, and doing works of charity, thus laying up treasures in heaven, which are there rewarded and will last there forever. "What folly", says St. Chrysostom, "to leave our goods where we cannot stay, instead of sending them before us where we are going — to heaven!"



## THURSDAY AFTER ASH-WEDNESDAY.

LESSON. (*Isai. xxxviii. 1—6.*) In those days Ezechias was sick even to death, and Isaias the son of Amos the prophet came unto him, and said to him: Thus saith the Lord: Take order with thy house for thou shalt die, and not live. And Ezechias turned his face towards the wall, and prayed to the Lord, and said: I beseech thee, O Lord, remember, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Ezechias wept with great weeping. And the word of the Lord came to Isaias, saying: Go and say to Ezechias: Thus said the Lord the God of David thy father: I have heard thy prayer, and I have seen thy tears, behold, I will add to thy days fifteen years: And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hands of the king of the Assyrians, and I will protect it, saith the Lord Almighty.

EXPLANATION. By the command of the Lord, death was announced by the prophet Isaias to Ezechias, king of Juda, in the fourteenth year of his reign, and he being advanced in years turned confidently to God, and asked that his life might be prolonged. His request was granted.

The Church in placing the example of the king of Juda before our eyes teaches us that God hears the prayers of the just who confide in Him. Let us by a pious life and by fervent prayer always be ready to die, thus securing eternal life which is infinitely more than the prolongation of temporal life.

GOSPEL. (*Matt. viii. 5—13.*)

[*See this gospel, commencing with the words: "And when he had entered into Capharnaum," and its explanation in the instruction on the third Sunday after Epiphany.*]

PETITION. Teach me, O Lord, to love my neighbor, as did this centurion, and grant me Thy grace, that I may imitate his great humility and believe in Thee always as confidently as he did, and trust Thy power and goodness.



## FRIDAY AFTER ASH-WEDNESDAY.

LESSON. (*Isai.* lviii. 1—9.) THUS saith the Lord God: Cry, cease not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their wicked doings, and the house of Jacob their sins. For they seek me from day to day, and desire to know my ways, as a nation that hath done justice, and hath not forsaken the judgment of their God: they ask of me the judgments of justice: they are willing to approach to God. Why have we fasted, and thou hast not regarded: why have we humbled our souls, and thou hast not taken notice? Behold in the day of your fast your own will is found, and you exact of all your debtors. Behold you fast for debates and strife, and strike with the fist wickedly. Do not fast as you have done until this day, to make your cry to be heard on high. Is this such a fast, as I have chosen: for a man to afflict his soul for a day? is this it, to wind his head about like a circle, and to spread sackcloth and ashes? wilt thou call this a fast, and a day acceptable to the Lord? Is not this rather the fast that I have chosen? loose the bands of wickedness, undo the bundles that oppress, let them that are broken go free, and break asunder every burden. Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the needy and the harborless into thy house: when thou shall see one naked, cover him, and despise not thy own flesh. Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy health shalt speedily arise, and thy justice shall go before thy face, and the glory of the Lord shall gather thee up. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall hear: thou shalt cry, and he shall say: Here I am; for I the Lord thy God am merciful.

EXPLANATION. Of the true fast such as God, through the prophet, demands, St. Bernard writes: "If only the tickling of the palate has sinned, let it fast, it is enough;



but since all the members of the body have sinned as well why should they not also fast? The eye should, therefore, abstain from all vain and curious sights; the ears from listening to idle talk and tales; the tongue from all detraction and frivolous words; but far more let the soul abstain from all sin and evil pleasures. Without this fast the Lord reproofs all others, as it is written: Behold in the day of your fast, your own will is found, that is, you fast as it pleases you, not as God requires."

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* v. 43—48. to vi. 1—4.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: You have heard that it hath been said: Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thy enemy. But I say to you: Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you: that you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven: who maketh his sun to rise upon the good and bad: and raineth upon the just and the unjust. For if you love them, that love you, what reward shall you have? do not even the publicans this? And if you salute your brethren only, what do you more? do not also the heathens this? Be you therefore perfect as also your heavenly Father is perfect. Take heed that you do not your justice before men, to be seen by them: otherwise you shall not have a reward of your Father who is in heaven. Therefore when thou dost an alms-deed, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honored by men: Amen I say to you, they have received their reward. But when thou dost alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth: that thy alms may be in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret, will repay thee.

EXPLANATION. In regard to loving our enemies which Christ so emphatically enforces in this day's gospel St. Chrysostom gives nine degrees when he says: "The first degree in loving your enemy is, that you do not begin the enmity; the second, that you do not continue it after it has begun; the third, that you repay not like for like,



but yield; the fourth, that you advance yourself to bear the insult; the fifth, that you offer more than the offender demands; the sixth, that you do not hate him by whom you suffer; the seventh, that you love him who offends you; the eighth, that you willingly bestow benefits upon him; the ninth, that you even pray to God for your enemy. Do this and you will follow Jesus, who even on the cross loved His enemies and prayed for them."

#### SATURDAY AFTER ASH-WEDNESDAY.

LESSON. (*Isai.* lviii. 9—14.) Thus saith the Lord God: If thou wilt take away the chain out of the midst of thee, and cease to stretch out the finger, and to speak that which is good for nothing. When thou shalt pour out thy soul to the hungry, and shalt satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise up in darkness, and thy darkness shall be as the noon-day. And the Lord will give thee rest continually, and will fill thy soul with brightness, and deliver thy bones, and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a fountain of water, whose waters shall not fail. And the places that have been desolate for ages shall be built in thee: thou shalt raise up the foundations of generation and generation: and thou shalt be called the repairer of the fences, turning the paths into rest. If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath from doing thy own will in my holy day, and call the sabbath delightful, and the holy of the Lord glorious, and glorify him, while thou dost not thy own ways, and thy own will is not found, to speak a word: then shalt thou be delighted in the Lord, and I will lift thee up above the high places of the earth, and will feed thee with the inheritance of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

EXPLANATION. In this lesson God promises peace and happiness to those who refrain from usury, by which is understood the chain with which the rich bind the poor; to those who are peaceful, practice silence, and aid the poor in their needs; He likewise promises abundant bless-



ings to those who celebrate the Lord's festivals devoutly and piously.

Let us learn from these words to be at peace with all men, to subdue our tongues, to exercise mercy towards those in want, and to celebrate the days of the Lord with sacred joy, and deep reverence, that glorious reward may be ours here and hereafter.

GOSPEL. (*Mark* vi. 47—56.) AT THAT TIME, when it was late, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and himself alone on the land. And seeing them laboring in rowing (for the wind was against them) and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh to them walking upon the sea: and he would have passed by them. But they seeing him walking upon the sea, thought it was an apparition, and they cried out. For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he spoke with them, and said to them: Have a good heart, it is I, fear ye not. And he went up to them into the ship, and the wind ceased. And they were far more astonished within themselves: for they understood not concerning the loaves: for their heart was blinded. And when they had passed over, they came into the Land of Genesareth, and set to the shore. And when they were gone out of the ship, immediately they knew him: and running through that whole country, they began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was. And whithersoever he entered, into towns or into villages or cities, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch but the hem of his garment, and as many as touched him were made whole.

EXPLANATION. We have to consider in this gospel: The omnipotence of Jesus, and the impotence of man; the apostles endeavoring the whole night to reach the shore; in the early dawn at the fourth watch of the night, Jesus is seen coming, walking on the waves, the wind ceases, and the ship speeds to the shore; — and the blindness of the disciples, who, the day before, had seen Jesus feed many thousand men with a few loaves of bread, and yet



could not see, that the Lord omnipotent in all things, could also walk upon the waves of the sea.

From this we learn the need we have of God's assistance and of His light. Let us often cry in our wants and temptations: "Send us light and strength, O Lord, that we may happily reach the shore of the heavenly fatherland!"

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT, CALLED INVOCABIT.

**T**HIS Sunday is called Invocabit, because the Introit of the Mass begins with this word, which is taken from the ninetieth psalm, wherein we are urged to confidence in God, who willingly hears the prayer of the penitent: He shall call upon me, and I will hear him; I will deliver him, and glorify him; I will fill him with length of days. (*Ps. xc. 15. 16.*) He that dwelleth in the aid of the Most High shall abide under the protection of the God of heaven. (*Ps. xc. 1.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** O God who dost purify Thy Church by the yearly fast of Lent; grant to Thy household that what we strive to obtain from Thee by abstinence, by good works we may secure. Through our Lord, &c.

**EPISTLE.** (*ii. Cor. vi. 1—10.*) BRETHREN, we exhort you that you receive not the grace of God in vain. For he saith: In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee. Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. Giving no offence to any man, that our ministry be not blamed: but in all things let us exhibit ourselves as the ministers of God; in much patience, in tribulations, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in prisons, in seditions, in labors, in watchings, in fastings, in chastity, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in sweetness, in the Holy Ghost, in charity unfeigned, in the word of truth, in the power of God, by the armor of justice on the



right hand, and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report, and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastised, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as needy, yet enriching many; as having nothing, and possessing all things.

EXPLANATION. The Church very appropriately reads on this day this epistle of St. Paul, in which he exhorts the Christians to make use of the time of grace. A special time of grace is Lent, in which everything invites to conversion and penance, a time, therefore, in which God is ready to make rich bestowal of His graces. St. Anselm says, those do not use the grace who do not coöperate. Let us, therefore, follow St. Paul's exhortation, and earnestly practise those virtues he places before us, and especially those of temperance, patience, chastity, liberality, love of God and of our neighbor. Let us arm ourselves with the arms of justice at the right and the left, that is, let us strive to be humble in prosperity and in adversity, confident of God's help. Let us never be led from the path of virtue, by mockery, contempt, nor by persecution, torments, or death.

ASPIRATION. Grant, O Jesus, that we may always faithfully coöperate with Thy graces, and employ well the time Thou hast again given for our salvation.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* iv. 1—11.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert, to be tempted by the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterwards he was hungry. And the tempter coming, said to him: If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. Who answered and said: It is written: Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God. Then the devil took him up into the holy city, and set him upon the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him: If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written: He hath given his angels charge over thee, and in their hands shall they bear thee up, lest perhaps thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said to him: It is written





again: Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again the devil took him up into a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and said to him: All these will I give thee, if, falling down, thou wilt adore me. Then Jesus said to him: Begone, Satan, for it is written, The Lord thy God shalt thou adore, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil left him; and behold, angels came, and ministered to him.

INSTRUCTION. I. Christ went into the desert by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost to prepare by fasting and



prayer, for His mission, and to endure the temptations of Satan, that, as St. Paul says, He might be one tempted in all things such as we are, without sin, and so become for us a High-priest who knew how to have compassion on our infirmities, (*Heb.* iv. 15.) and to show us by His own example, how we should, armed with the word of God, as with a sword, overcome the tempter. (*Eph.* vi. 17.) — Let us, therefore, courageously follow Christ to the combat against all temptations, with His assistance it will not be hard to conquer them. He has certainly taught us to overcome the hardest ones: the lust of the eyes, of the flesh, and the pride of life, and if we overcome these, it will be easy to conquer the rest.

II. If Christ, the only Son of God, permitted Himself to be tempted by Satan, even to be taken up on a high mountain, and to the pinnacle of the temple, it should not appear strange to us, that we are assailed by many temptations, or that we should find in the lives of so many saints that the evil spirit tormented them by various images of terror and vexation. This we find in the history of the pious Job, where we also find at the same time, that the evil spirit cannot harm a hair of our head without God's permission.

III. From the coming of the angels to minister to Christ, after He had conquered Satan, we see that all who bravely resist temptations, will enjoy the assistance and consolations of the heavenly spirits.

## INSTRUCTION ON TEMPTATION.

*To be tempted by the devil. (Matt. iv. 1.)*

*What is a temptation?*

**A** temptation is either a trial for instruction and exercise in virtue, or a deception and incitement to sin. In the first sense, God tempts man; in the second, he is tempted by the devil, the world or bad people, and the flesh, by evil thoughts, feelings, words, or works.

*By what are we principally tempted?*

By our own evil concupiscence and inclination to sin which adhere to us through original sin, (*Jam.* i. 14.) on account of which it is said, that the flesh lusteth against the spirit. (*Gal.* v. 17.)

*Does the devil also tempt us?*

He does, and is therefore called, in this day's gospel, the tempter. St. Peter teaches us this, having himself



experienced it: Be sober and watch: because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour. (*i Peter* v. 8.) Not all temptations are to be ascribed to the devil, however, they often come from our own corrupt nature, our own incautiousness, or looseness of our senses, by which we expose ourselves to the danger of falling into sin.

*How does the devil tempt us to sin?*

In a twofold manner: He incites the concupiscence of man to those sins to which he sees him inclined, and then seeks to blind and confuse his imagination, so that he neither reflects, nor properly sees the temporal injury, disgrace, and derision, nor the shamefulness of sin and its eternal punishment. Thus the devil seduced Eve, our first mother, and thus he tempted Christ, with whom he could not, of course, succeed, for He was incapable of sin. He tempts bad people to persecute us, or to try us by their wicked vanities, as he did by the friends of Job.

*Can the devil force us to evil?*

He cannot; "for as a chained dog," says St. Augustine, "can bite none but those who go near him, so the devil cannot harm with his temptations those who do not consent to them. Like the dog he can bark at you, but cannot bite you against your will." Not by force but by persuasion Satan strives to injure, he does not force our consent, but entreats it. Seek, therefore, to subdue your passions and your senses, especially your eyes, and you will either remain free from all temptations, or easily overcome them.

*Does God also tempt us?*

God does indeed tempt us, but not to sin, as St. James expressly teaches. (*Jam.* i. 13.) God either Himself proves us by sufferings and adversities, or He permits the temptations of the devil or evil-minded people to give us opportunity to practise the virtues of love, patience, obedience, etc. Thus He said to the Jews through Moses: The Lord your God trieth you, that it may appear whether you love him with all your heart, and with all your soul, or no. (*Deut.* xiii. 3.)

*Does God permit us to be tempted by man also?*

He does, and for the same reasons. Thus He permitted the chaste Joseph to be tempted by Putiphar's wife; (*Gen.*



xxxix. 7.) Job by his wife and his friends. (*Job* ii. 9.) But He never permits us to be tempted beyond our strength, but gives us always sufficient grace to overcome and even to derive benefit from the temptation. (i *Cor.* x. 13.)

*Are temptations pernicious and bad?*

No; they are useful and necessary, rather. "Hard is the fight," St. Bernard writes, "but meritorious, for although it is accompanied by suffering, it is followed by the crown;" (*Apoc.* iii. 12.) and Origen says. (*Libr. Num.*) "As meat becomes corrupt without salt, so does the soul without temptations." Temptations, then, are only injurious when consent is given, and we suffer ourselves to be overcome by them.

*When do we consent to temptations?*

When we knowingly and willingly decide to do the evil to which we are tempted; as long as we resist we commit no sin.

*What are the best means of overcoming temptations?*

Humility; for thus answered St. Anthony, when he saw the whole earth covered with snares, and was asked, "Who will escape?" "The humble;" he who knows his own frailty, distrusts himself, and relies only on God who resists the proud and gives His grace to the humble; (*Jam.* iv. 6.) the fervent invocation of the Mother of God, of our holy guardian angels and patron saints; the pronouncing of the holy name of Jesus, making the sign of the cross, sprinkling holy water; the remembrance of the presence of God who knows our most secret thoughts, and before whom we are indeed ashamed to think or do that which would cause us shame in the presence of an honorable person; frequent meditation on death, hell, and eternal joys; fleeing from all those persons by whom, and places in which we are generally tempted; fervent prayers, especially ejaculations, as: "Lord, save me, lest I perish! Lord, hasten to help me!" finally, the sincere acknowledgment of our temptations at the tribunal of penance, which is a remedy especially recommended by pious spiritual teachers.

PRAYER. O Lord Jesus! who spent forty days in the desert without food or drink, and didst permit Thyself to be tempted by the evil spirit, give me, I beseech Thee by that holy fast, the grace to combat,



during this holy season of Lent, under Thy protection, against intemperance, and to resist the suggestions of Satan that I may win the crown of eternal life. Amen.

**MONDAY IN THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT.**

LESSON. (*Ezech.* xxxiv. 11—16.) THUS saith the Lord God: Behold I myself will seek my sheep, and will visit them. As the shepherd visiteth his flock, in the day when he shall be in the midst of his sheep that were scattered: so will I visit my sheep, and will deliver them out of all the places, where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the peoples, and will gather them out of the countries, and will bring them to their own land: and I will feed them in the mountains of Israel, by the rivers, and in all the habitations of the land. I will feed them in the most fruitful pastures, and their pastures shall be in the high mountains of Israel: there shall they rest on the green grass, and be fed in fat pastures upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my sheep: and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost, and that which was driven away, I will bring again, and I will bind up that which was broken, and I will strengthen that which was weak, and that which was fat and strong, I will preserve: and I will feed them in judgment, saith the Lord Almighty.

EXPLANATION. After these words to the Jews, to whom God promised, that He would free them from Babylonian captivity, and then pasture and protect them like a good pastor, the prophet describes, in a higher sense, the time when all nations will be united in one fold, under one shepherd, namely, Christ Jesus. These words may be applied, at the same time, to a soul, which by a true conversion has been released from the power of Satan by the Good Shepherd, Jesus, who has followed it everywhere, and is now carefully nourished by Him, by His word and His blessed Sacraments and filled with heavenly consolations. — Hasten back to Him, O Christian soul, if you have



strayed away from Jesus, the Good Shepherd; He will receive you joyfully, and give you His love!

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxv. 31—46.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: When the Son of man shall come in his majesty, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit upon the seat of his majesty: and all nations shall be gathered together before him, and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left. Then shall the king say to them that shall be on his right hand: Come ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry, and you gave me to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink: I was a stranger, and you took me in: naked, and you clothed me: sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came to me. Then shall the just answer him, saying: Lord, when did we see thee hungry, and feed thee: thirsty, and gave thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger, and took thee in: or naked, and covered thee? Or when did we see thee sick or in prison, and came to thee? And the king answering, shall say to them: Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me. Then shall he say to them also that shall be on his left hand: Depart from me you cursed into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave me not to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave me not to drink: I was a stranger, and you took me not in: naked, and you covered me not: sick, and in prison, and you did not visit me. Then they also shall answer him, saying: Lord when did we see thee hungry or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to thee? Then he shall answer them,



saying: Amen I say to you, as long as you did it not to one of these least, neither did you do it to me. And these shall go into everlasting punishment: but the just, into life everlasting.

EXPLANATION. From the words of this gospel we see how necessary it is to be charitable to the poor, since Jesus gives such great reward to the charitable, and so severely punishes those who do not practise this virtue. St. Francis the Seraph says: "In the poor Christ reveals Himself to us as in a mirror; as often, therefore, as a poor or feeble person meets you, remember the poverty and weakness Christ took upon Himself for us, and revere in him Christ Himself, who says: As long as you did it to one of these least in my name, you did it to me."

#### TUESDAY IN THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Isai.* lv. 6—11.) IN THOSE DAYS, Isaias the prophet spake, saying: Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found: call upon him, while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unjust man his thoughts, and let him return to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God: for he is bountiful to forgive. For my thoughts are not your thoughts: nor your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are my ways exalted above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts. And as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return no more thither, but soak the earth, and water it, and make it to spring, and give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be, which shall go forth from my mouth: it shall not return to me void, but it shall do whatsoever I please, and shall prosper in the things for which I sent it, saith the Lord Almighty.

EXPLANATION. The prophet here exhorts the sinner to use the time of grace, for real conversion, when God is so willing to receive him. He should not permit himself to be kept back, neither by the number nor the enormity of his sins; for greater than all his sins is the mercy of



God. — Consider St. Bernard's words on this text: Seek the Lord, while he may be found: "There are three causes which render the search for the Lord fruitless, — not to seek Him at the proper time, in the proper manner, and where He can be found. The proper time is in this life, with death the search is ended, the door is locked; the proper manner is to seek with ardent desire and with perseverance; the right place is in meditating on the life, passion, and death of Jesus, and His glory in heaven." Seek the Lord in time, therefore, seek Him with all zeal, in prayer and contemplation.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxi. 10—17.) AT THAT TIME, When he was come into Jerusalem, the whole city was moved, saying: Who is this? And the people said: This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth of Galilee. And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the chairs of them that sold doves: and he saith to them: It is written: My house shall be called the house of prayer: but you have made it a den of thieves. And there came to him the blind, and the lame in the temple: and he healed them. And the chief priests and scribes seeing the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying: Hosanna to the son of David; were moved with indignation, and said to him: Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus said to them: Yea, have you never read: Out of the mouths of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise? And leaving them, he went out of the city into Bethania: and remained there.

EXPLANATION. The spirit of usury induced many Jews to trade even in the vestibule of the temple. Jesus condemning this disgraceful disorder, turned out with divine force the buyers and sellers. If Jesus thus condemned and punished those who desecrated the entrance of the temple, how will He scorn and punish those Christians who desecrate the church, the house in which Jesus is present in the blessed Sacrament, by talking, laughing, and other misdemeanors? Always conduct yourself, therefore, with rev-



erence in the house of God, and consider that even the angels prostrate before the eyes of God, cover their faces, adoring the Lord of heaven and earth.

### WEDNESDAY IN THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT.

[*Emberday.*]

LESSON. (iii *Kings* xix. 3—8.) IN THOSE DAYS, Elias came into Bersabee of Juda, and left his servant there, and he went forward, one day's journey into the desert. And when he was there, and sat under a juniper tree, he requested for his soul that he might die, and said: It is enough for me Lord, take away my soul: for I am no better than my fathers. And he cast himself down, and slept in the shadow of the juniper tree: and behold an angel of the Lord touched him, and said to him: Arise, and eat. He looked, and behold there was at his head a hearth-cake, and a vessel of water: and he ate and drank, and he fell asleep again. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said to him: Arise, eat: for thou hast yet a great way to go. And he arose, and ate, and drank, and walked in the strength of that food forty days, and forty nights, unto the mount of God.

EXPLANATION. The Prophet Elias had caused the death of the idolatrous priests of Baal at the brook Cison, in the Land of Juda, after he had proved to them by a great miracle that he worshiped the one true God. The death of the idolatrous priests being announced to the impious Queen Jezabel, she then threatened Elias with death. Elias fled to the desert, but God did not abandon His servant, and sent him food, strengthened by which he walked forty days and forty nights to Mount Horeb, where God appeared to him, and gave him important messages. The holy Fathers regard the juniper tree, under which Elias rested, as prefiguring the cross of Christ, under the shadow of which there is rest for all who suffer; the food by which he was sustained, was a type of holy Communion by which we are strengthened on the road to heaven, and the forty days and forty nights which he passed without food are a figure of Christ's fast of forty days.



GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xii. 38—50.) AT THAT TIME, Some of the Scribes and Pharisees answered him saying: Master, we would see a sign from thee. Who answering said to them: An evil and adulterous generation seeketh for a sign: and a sign shall not be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights; so shall the Son of man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. The men of Ninive shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they did penance at the preaching of Jonas. And behold a greater than Jonas here. The queen of the south shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon here. When an unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out. And coming he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then he goeth, and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is made worse than the first. So shall it be also to this wicked generation. As he was yet speaking to the multitudes, behold his mother and his brethren stood without, seeking to speak to him. And one said unto him: Behold thy mother and thy brethren stand without, seeking thee. But he answering him that told him, said: Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? and stretching forth his hand towards his disciples, he said: Behold my mother and my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of my Father, that is in heaven: he is my brother, and sister, and mother.

EXPLANATION. All the signs and miracles which Christ the Lord wrought, were confirmed only by His res-



urrection. Had Christ not risen, all His miracles would have been without avail. For this reason He drew the attention of the Pharisees to His resurrection, which was already prefigured by the Prophet Jonas who was three days inside the whale, and on the third day came forth from it unharmed. The inhabitants of Ninive repented, through the preaching of the Prophet Jonas without asking for a miracle. What will become of us if we do not repent, we who know of so many miracles of our Lord and His apostles, and have received so many graces from Him! But our repentance must be real, for terrible is his condition who carelessly relapses. Not one, but seven devils will possess him. By a firm, animated faith, we are in a spiritual manner made a brother or sister of Christ, and if by our example and our words we cause the love of Christ to be born in the heart of our neighbor, so that he fulfils the will of the Heavenly Father, we are also spiritually made the mother of Christ. Ah, what dignity is his who believes in Jesus, and loves Him above all!

#### THURSDAY IN THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Ezech. xviii. 1—9.*) IN THOSE DAYS, The word of the Lord came to me, saying: What is the meaning that you use among you this parable as a proverb in the land of Israel, saying: The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the teeth of the children are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord God, this parable shall be no more to you a proverb in Israel. Behold all souls are mine: as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, the same shall die. And if a man be just, and do judgment and justice, and hath not eaten upon the mountains, nor lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel: and hath not defiled his neighbor's wife, nor come near to a menstruous woman: and hath not wronged any man: but hath restored the pledge to the debtor, hath taken nothing away by violence: hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment: hath not lent upon usury, nor taken any increase: hath withdrawn



his hand from iniquity, and hath executed true judgment between man and man: hath walked in my commandments, and kept my judgments, to do according to truth: he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord God.

EXPLANATION. As the Jews had complained to God, at different times, that they were made to suffer for the



sins of their forefathers, God, by the prophet, told them their complaints were unfounded, for He loved and judged all men, the father as the son, and punished the sinner only. It is indeed frequently stated in the holy Scriptures,



that God visits the sins of parents upon the children, but this is the case only with those who, born with their parents' evil inclinations, do not resist, but imitate the bad habits of their parents. Live in accordance with God's will, and you will always be happy.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xv. 21—28.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus went from thence, and retired into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And behold a woman of Canaan who came out of those coasts, crying out, said to him; Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David: my daughter is grievously troubled by a devil. Who answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying: Send her away: for she crieth after us: and he answering said: I was not sent but to the sheep that are lost of the house of Israel. But she came and adored him, saying: Lord, help me. Who answering, said: It is not good to take the bread of the children, and to cast it to the dogs. But she said: Yea, Lord: for the whelps also eat of the crumbs that fall from the table of their masters. Then Jesus answering, said to her: O woman, great is thy faith: be it done to thee as thou wilt. And her daughter was cured from that hour.

EXPLANATION. How true are the words of the prophet: "God at all times hears the desires of the poor." The distressed mother ceased not to implore help of Jesus, and she was heard. St. Augustine beautifully says of this: "The continued sighs of a desiring and longing heart are sweet music unto Christ;" and St. Chrysostom: "Whether or not we receive that for which we ask, let us ever persevere in prayer; if we receive, we are thankful; are we refused, we remain patient. For if God refuses anything, it is the same as if He had granted us something. For we know not what is for our benefit, God only knows."

#### FRIDAY IN THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT.

[*Ember-day.*]

LESSON. (*Ezech.* xviii. 20—28.) THUS saith the Lord: The soul that sinneth, the same shall die: the



son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, and the father shall not bear the iniquity of the son: the justice of the just shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. But if the wicked do penance for all his sins, which he hath committed, and keep all my commandments, and do judgment, and justice: living he shall live, and shall not die. I will not remember all his iniquities, that he hath done: in his justice which he hath wrought, he shall live. Is it my will that a sinner should die, saith the Lord God, and not that he should be converted from his ways, and live? But if the just man turn himself away from his justice, and do iniquity according to all the abominations, which the wicked man useth to work, shall he live? all his justices, which he hath done, shall not be remembered: in the prevarication, by which he hath prevaricated, and in his sin, which he hath committed, in them he shall die. And you have said: The way of the Lord is not right. Hear ye therefore, O house of Israel: Is it my way that is not right, and are not rather your ways perverse? For when the just turneth himself away from his justice, and committeth iniquity, he shall die therein: in the injustice that he hath wrought he shall die. And when the wicked turneth himself away from his wickedness, which he hath wrought, and doeth judgment and justice: he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth and turneth away himself from all his iniquities, which he hath wrought, he shall surely live, and not die, saith the Lord Almighty.

EXPLANATION. How consoling are the words of the Lord for every one, even for the greatest sinner, if he only sincerely return to God, and abandon the ways of sin! How dreadful, on the contrary, are they for him who postpones his conversion from day to day, and will finally die in his sins! Despair not, then, O sinner, only follow instantly the call to repentance; "God pardons, yes, forgets all thy sins!"



GOSPEL. (*John* v. 1—15.) AT **THAT TIME**, There was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem a pond, called Probatica, which in Hebrew is named Bethsaida, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick, of blind, of lame, of withered, waiting for the moving of the water. And an angel of the Lord descended at certain times into the pond: and the water was moved. And he that went down first into the pond after the motion of the water, was made whole of whatsoever infirmity he lay under. And there was a certain man there, that had been eight and thirty years under his infirmity. Him when Jesus had seen lying, and knew that he had been now a long time, he saith to him: Wilt thou be made whole? The infirm man answered him: Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pond: for whilst I am coming, another goeth down before me. Jesus saith to him: Arise, take up thy bed, and walk: and immediately the man was made whole: and he took up his bed, and walked. And it was the Sabbath that day. The Jews therefore said to him that was healed. It is the Sabbath, it is not lawful for thee to take up thy bed. He answered them: He that made me whole, he said to me: Take up thy bed, and walk. They asked him therefore: Who is that man who said to thee: Take up thy bed, and walk? But he who was healed, knew not who it was. For Jesus went aside from the multitude standing in the place. Afterwards Jesus findeth him in the temple, and saith to him: Behold thou art made whole: sin no more, lest some worse thing happen to thee. The man went his way, and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him whole.

EXPLANATION. At a certain, but unknown time, an angel came down and moved the water in the pool, by



which that patient, and he only, who first descended into it, was healed of his infirmity. The pool is a figure of the holy Sacrament of Penance. When God moves your heart by His grace to sorrow for your sins, then hasten at once to the tribunal of penance, where not one, but all who come, find healing at all times. But take to heart the exhortation of Jesus: "Sin no more, lest some worse thing happen to thee."

## SATURDAY IN THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT.

[*Ember-day.*]

EPISTLE. (i *Thess.* v. 14—23.) BRETHREN: We beseech you, rebuke the unquiet, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient towards all men. See that none render evil for evil to any man: but ever follow that which is good towards each other, and towards all men. Always rejoice. Pray without ceasing. In all things give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you all. Extinguish not the spirit. Despise not prophecies. But prove all things: hold fast that which is good. From all appearance of evil refrain yourselves; and may the God of peace himself sanctify you in all things: that your whole spirit, and soul, and body may be preserved blameless in the coming of our Lord Christ Jesus.

EXPLANATION. Among other admonitions the apostle exhorts us not to extinguish by sin, levity, and a distracted life the spirit in ourselves, that is, the graces, the inspirations, and the enlightenment of the Holy Ghost; and tells us, that we should not despise prophecies, that is, the gift of expounding the Scriptures, preaching the mysteries of faith, but rather examine if they agree with the teachings of the Church. Let us in all things follow the inspirations of the Holy Ghost, and the teachings of our holy Church, and we will never err, but confidently look for the day of Christ's coming in judgment.

[*For the gospel and its explanation see instruction for tomorrow.*]

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT. (REMINISCERE.)



THE Introit of this day's Mass, which begins with the word *Reminiscere*, from which this Sunday derives its name, is the prayer of a soul begging God's assistance, that she may sin no more: Remember, O Lord, Thy compassions and Thy mercies, which are from the beginning, lest at any time our enemies rule over us: deliver us O God of Israel, from all our tribulations. To Thee O Lord, have I lifted up my soul: in Thee, O my God, I put my trust; let me not be ashamed. (*Ps. xxiv.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** O God, who seest us to be destitute of strength, keep us both inwardly and outwardly; that we may be defended in the body from all adversities, and cleansed in our mind from all evil thoughts. Through our Lord, &c.

**EPISTLE.** (*i Thess. iv. 1—7.*) BRETHREN, we pray and beseech you in the Lord Jesus, that as you have received of us, how you ought to walk, and to please God, so also you would walk, that you may abound the more. For you know what precepts I have given to you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that you should abstain from fornication; that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor; not in the passion of lust, like the Gentiles that know not God: and that no man over-reach nor circumvent his brother in business; because the Lord is the avenger of all these things, as we have told you before, and have testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto sanctification; in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**EXPLANATION.** From these words we see, that the great Teacher of Nations as carefully showed the Christian



congregations the sanctity of their calling, as he labored to lead them from the blindness and abominations of heathenism.

ASPIRATION. Grant, O God, that I may live an honest, chaste and holy life in accordance with my vocation, and go not after earthly and carnal pleasures, as the heathens who know Thee not.



GOSPEL. (*Matt. xvii. 1—9.*) AT THAT TIME, Jesus took Peter, and James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart: and he was transfigured before them. And his face did shine as



the sun, and his garments became white as snow. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then Peter answering, said to Jesus: Lord, it is good for us to be here; if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. And as he was yet speaking, behold a bright cloud overshadowed them, and lo, a voice out of the cloud, saying: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And the disciples hearing, fell upon their face, and were very much afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said to them: Arise, and fear not. And they lifting up their eyes, saw no one, but only Jesus. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying: Tell the vision to no man: till the Son of Man be risen from the dead.

*Why was Christ transfigured in presence of His apostles on Mount Thabor?*

To permit them to see the glorious majesty of His divinity; to guard them from doubts when they should afterwards see Him die on Mount Calvary; to encourage the disciples and all the faithful to be patient in all crosses and afflictions, for the bodies of the just at the resurrection will be made like the glorified body of Christ. (*Phil.* iii. 21.)

*Why did Moses and Elias appear there?*

That they might testify, that Jesus was really the Saviour announced by the law and the prophets, and that the law and the prophets received fulfillment in Him. The former was represented by Moses, the latter by Elias.

*Why did Peter wish to build three tabernacles there?*

The delightful sweetness of the apparition in which Jesus made him participator so enraptured him, that he knew not what he said, not considering that glory can be attained only through sufferings, the crown through fight, joy through crosses and afflictions.

ASPIRATION. Draw us, O Jesus, to Thee, that by the contemplation of the sacred joys awaiting us,



we, by Thy grace, may not be defeated in the spiritual contest, but conquer through Thy grace and carry off the unfading crown of victory.

### MONDAY IN THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Dan.* ix. 15—19.) IN THOSE DAYS, Daniel prayed to the Lord, saying: O Lord our God, who hast brought forth thy people out of the land of Egypt with a strong hand, and hast made thee a name as at this day: we have sinned, we have committed iniquity, O Lord, against all thy justice: let thy wrath and thy indignation be turned away, I beseech thee, from thy city Jerusalem, and from thy holy mountain. For by reason of our sins, and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem, and thy people are a reproach to all that are round about us. Now therefore, O our God, hear the supplication of thy servant and his prayers: and shew thy face upon thy sanctuary which is desolate, for thy own sake. Incline, O my God, thy ear, and hear: open thy eyes, and see our desolation, and the city upon which thy name is called: for it is not for our justifications that we present our prayers before thy face, but for the multitude of thy tender mercies. O Lord, hear: O Lord, be appeased: hearken and do: delay not for thy own sake, O my God: because thy name is invoked upon thy city, and upon thy people, O Lord our God.

EXPLANATION. Under the reign of king Joachim, the Jews with their king were led into Babylonian captivity in punishment for their wickedness, Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed. Daniel, also, though a faithful follower of the divine law, was among the captives. On account of his wisdom he was raised to great dignities by king Nabuchodonosor, but he could not forget the destruction of the temple, of Jerusalem, and the sad condition of the Jews who were to remain seventy years in painful servitude before they could return to their own country. In this lesson the prophet prays to God for the speedy return



of his people, and for the restoration of the city and temple; by which we are taught, at the same time, to entreat God for redemption from the servitude of sin, and for the restoration of the immaculate purity of our soul which is destroyed by sin.

GOSPEL. (*John* viii, 21—29.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to the multitude of the Jews: I go, and you shall seek me, and you shall die in your sin. Whither I go, you cannot come. The Jews therefore said: Will he kill himself, because he said: Whither I go, you cannot come? And he said to them: You are from beneath, I am from above. You are of this world, I am not of this world. Therefore I say to you, that you shall die in your sins; for if you believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sin. They said therefore to him: Who art thou? Jesus said to them: The beginning, who also speak unto you. Many things I have to speak and to judge of you; but he that sent me is true: and the things I have heard of him, these same I speak in the world. And they understood not that he called God his Father. Jesus therefore said to them: When you shall have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall you know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself, but as the Father hath taught me, these things I speak: and he that sent me is with me, and he hath not left me alone: for I do always the things that please him.

EXPLANATION. Christ here tells the Jews, who, out of hatred, intended to put Him to death, and were lying in wait for an opportunity to do so, that whither He was going, they could not come, that is, to His Father in heaven, because they were taken up with the riches and pleasures of this world only, and, therefore, did not believe that He had come from heaven to redeem the world, and so they die in their sins. — Let us learn from this how necessary it is that we should despise the world, for the friendship of this world is the enmity of God, (*Jam.* iv. 4.) and he who is a friend of the world loses his faith, and dies in his sins.



**TUESDAY IN THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT.**

LESSON. (iii *Kings* xvii. 8—16.) IN THOSE DAYS, The word of the Lord came to Elias the Thesbite, saying: Arise, and go to Sarephta a city of the Sidonians, and dwell there: for I have commanded a widow-woman there to feed thee. He arose, and went to Sarephta. And when he was come to the gate of the city, he saw the widow-woman gathering sticks, and he called her, and said to her: Give me a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And when she was going to fetch it, he called after her, saying: Bring me also, I beseech thee, a morsel of bread in thy hand. And she answered: As the Lord thy God liveth, I have no bread, but only a handful of meal in a pot, and a little oil in a cruse: behold I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it, for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And Elias said to her: Fear not, but go, and do as thou hast said: but first make for me of the same meal a little hearth cake, and bring it to me: and after make for thyself and thy son. For thus saith the Lord the God of Israel: The pot of meal shall not waste, nor the cruse of oil be diminished, until the day wherein the Lord will give rain upon the face of the earth. She went and did according to the word of Elias: and he ate, and she, and her house: and from that day the pot of meal wasted not, and the cruse of oil was not diminished, according to the word of the Lord, which he spoke in the hand of Elias.

EXPLANATION. In this lesson the Church calls our attention, to the example of the widow of Sarephta who was willing to share her last morsel with the prophet Elias, thereby proving how pleasing to God it is to be charitable to the poor, which virtue He rewards even in this world. "Alms-giving", says St. Chrysostom, "is the most profitable profession;" and St. John, Archbishop of Alexandria, who on account of his charity to the poor received the name of "Alms-giver", often said: "The more I give to the poor,



the more and the greater I receive from God." Do likewise, and thou wilt find, that even now the hand of the Lord is not shortened.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxiii. 1—12.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to his disciples, saying: the Scribes and the Pharisees have sitten on the chair of Moses. All things therefore whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do: but according to their works do ye not: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy and insupportable burdens, and lay them on men's shoulders: but with a finger of their own they will not move them. And all their works they do for to be seen of men; for they make their phylacteries broad and enlarge their fringes. And they love the first places at feasts, and the first chairs in the synagogues, and salutations in the market-place, and to be called by men, Rabbi. But be not you called Rabbi; for one is your Master, and all you are brethren. And call none your father upon earth: for one is your Father, who is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, Christ. He that is the greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be humbled: and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted.

EXPLANATION. Christ warns us against the hypocrisy and ambition of the Pharisees who, not seeing how miserable they were, sought only to be honored and praised. — Flee from vain glory, ambition, and hypocrisy, for "all the virtues and excellent qualities of a man, if he is puffed with pride and vanity, have only the appearance of good without inward value," says St. Francis de Sales, (*Phil.* iii. 4.) and St. Gregory says, "All that we do, is lost, if it be not founded on humility;" and St. Bernard, "Narrow is the door of heaven, and only the small can pass through," that is, only those who, like children, walk simply and humbly.

#### WEDNESDAY IN THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Esther* xiii. 8—17.) IN THOSE DAYS, Mardochai besought the Lord, remembering all his works,



and said: O Lord, Lord, almighty King, for all things are in thy power, and there is none that can resist thy will, if thou determine to save Israel. Thou hast made heaven and earth, and all things that are under the cope of heaven. Thou art Lord of all, and there is none that can resist thy majesty. Thou knowest all things, and thou knowest that it was not out of pride and contempt, or any desire of glory, that I refused to worship the proud Aman, (for I would willingly and readily for the salvation of Israel have kissed even the steps of his feet,) but I feared lest I should transfer the honor of my God to a man, and lest I should adore any one except my God. And now O Lord, O King, O God of Abraham, have mercy on thy people, because our enemies resolve to destroy us, and extinguish thy inheritance. Despise not thy portion which thou hast redeemed for thyself out of Egypt. Hear my supplication, and be merciful to thy lot and inheritance, and turn our mourning into joy, that we may live and praise thy name O Lord, and shut not the mouths of them that sing to thee, O Lord our God.

EXPLANATION. Aman, one of the favorites of the Persian King Assuerus, aspired in his pride and conceit to divine honors. Mardochai, a Jew and foster-father of Queen Esther, refused them to him, because they are due only to God. In revenge Aman sought to destroy all the Jews, and bring Mardochai to the gallows, which he had already erected for him. In this strait Mardochai prayed to God, and his prayer was heard. Aman himself, when his evil intentions became known, was hanged on the very gallows he had prepared for Mardochai. — Consider the effect of Mardochai's prayer, and the truth that God ruins the proud, (*Luke i. 52.*) and that he who diggeth a pit for his neighbor, generally falls into it himself.

GOSPEL. (*Matt. xx. 17—28.*) AT THAT TIME, Jesus going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart, and said to them: Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,



and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to be mocked, and scourged, and crucified, and the third day he shall rise again. Then came to him the mother of the sons of Zebedee with her sons, adoring and asking something of him. Who said to her: What wilt thou? She saith to him: Say that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom. And Jesus answering, said: You know not what you ask. Can you drink the chalice that I shall drink? They say to him: We can. He saith to them: Of my chalice indeed you shall drink: but to sit on my right or left hand, is not mine to give to you, but to them for whom it is prepared by my Father. And the ten hearing it, were moved with indignation against the two brethren. But Jesus called them to him, and said: You know that the princes of the Gentiles lord it over them: and they that are the greater, exercise power upon them. It shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be the greater among you, let him be your minister: and he that will be first among you, shall be your servant; even as the Son of man is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a redemption for many.

EXPLANATION. I. For the last time the Saviour goes to Jerusalem, and, on His way, announces His death on the cross to the twelve apostles. Of this St. Chrysostom says: "The salvation of men is in the death of Christ, and there is nothing for which we should thank God more than for the death of His Son. Therefore Christ took the twelve apostles aside, and told them of the mystery of His death, that this precious treasure might be enclosed in the best hearts, that is, in the hearts of the apostles," that they might give it to all men.

II. To the ambitious request of the mother of James and John, Jesus replied, that they must indeed suffer, but to sit at His right hand He could not give. Of this St. Remigius and the venerable Bede write: "It is not suitable for me to give them the place at my right hand, because you are ambitious. This place is prepared for the humble.



If you are humble, it is also ready for you." See how necessary is humility, for without it even martyrdom is not rewarded.

### THURSDAY IN THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Jer.* xvii. 5—10.) Thus saith the Lord: Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like tamarick in the desert, and he shall not see when good shall come: but he shall dwell in dryness in the desert, in a salt land, and not inhabited. Blessed be the man that trusteth in the Lord, and the Lord shall be his confidence. And he shall be as a tree that is planted by the waters, that spreadeth out its roots towards moisture: and it shall not fear when the heat cometh. And the leaf thereof shall be green, and in the time of drought it shall not be solicitous, neither shall it cease at any time to bring forth fruit. The heart is perverse above all things, and unsearchable: who can know it? I am the Lord that search the heart, and prove the reins: who give to every one according to his way, and according to the fruit of his devices, saith the Lord Almighty.

INSTRUCTION. There is a threefold curse of God upon him who confides in man, and not in God; namely, God, the angels, and saints abandon him; all divine grace and assistance in good works are withdrawn from him; all the merit of his work is taken away, and all his actions and undertakings will bring no good fruit. — Never place your confidence, therefore, in miserable, fickle man, but in the omnipotent, eternal God, and you will always receive assistance.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xvi. 19—31.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to the Pharisees: There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen: and feasted sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, who lay at his gate, full of sores, desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell



from the rich man's table and no one did give him: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. And the rich man also died: and he was buried in hell. And lifting up his eyes, when he was in torments, he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom: and he cried and said: Father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, to cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. And Abraham said to him: Son, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy life-time, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented: and besides all this, between us and you there is fixed a great chaos: so that they who would pass from hence to you, cannot, nor from thence come hither. And he said: Then father, I beseech thee that thou wouldst send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torments. And Abraham said to him: They have Moses and the prophets: let them hear them. But he said: No, Father Abraham: but if one went to them from the dead, they will do penance. And he said to him: If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe, if one rise again from the dead.

EXPLANATION. Christ teaches in this parable that those who make bad use of earthly riches, and abuse them by vain luxuries, will be deprived of eternal good and punished with everlasting torments, while those, who following Christ's example, lead a poor, toilsome, but virtuous life, will be eternally rewarded. "It is difficult, even impossible," writes St. Jerome, "for those who enjoy riches here, to enjoy eternal ones in future; impossible for one here to fill his stomach, and in the next world his soul, passing over from earthly pleasures to heavenly joys, receiving honor on earth and honor also in heaven."



## FRIDAY IN THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Gen.* xxxvii. 6—22.) IN THOSE DAYS, Joseph said to his brethren: Hear my dream which I dreamed: I thought we were binding sheaves in the field: and my sheaf arose as it were, and stood, and your sheaves standing about bowed down before my sheaf. His brethren answered: Shalt thou be our king? or shall we be subject to thy dominion? Therefore this matter of his dreams and words ministered nourishment to their envy and hatred. He dreamed also another dream, which he told his brethren, saying: I saw in a dream, as it were the sun, and the moon, and eleven stars worshipping me. And when he had told this to his father, and brethren, his father rebuked him, and said: What meaneth this dream that thou hast dreamed? shall I and thy mother, and thy brethren worship thee upon the earth? His brethren therefore envied him: but his father considered the thing with himself. And when his brethren abode in Sichem, feeding their father's flocks, Israel said to him: Thy brethren feed the sheep in Sichem: come, I will send thee to them. And when he answered: I am ready: he said to him: Go, and see if all things be well with thy brethren, and the cattle: and bring me word again what is doing. So being sent from the vale of Hebron, he came to Sichem: and a man found him there wandering in the field, and asked what he sought. But he answered: I seek my brethren, tell me where they feed the flocks. And the man said to him: They are departed from this place: for I heard them say: let us go to Dothain. And Joseph went forward after his brethren, and found them in Dothain. And when they saw him afar off, before he came nigh them, they thought to kill him: and said one to another: Behold the dreamer cometh, come, let us kill him, and cast him into some old pit: and



we will say: some evil beast hath devoured him: and then it shall appear what his dreams avail him. And Ruben hearing this, endeavoured to deliver him out of their hands, and said: Do not take away his life, nor shed his blood: but cast him into this pit, that is in the wilderness, and keep your hands harmless: now he said this, being desirous to deliver him out of their hands, and to restore him to his father.

INSTRUCTION. This history shows us to what great crimes men may be led by envy. St. Cyprian says: "envy is the root of all evil, the foundation of war, the seed of crime," and St. Chrysostom, "The envious are worse than wild beasts, and equal to the devils, even still worse than they; for the devils injure neither themselves nor their kind, while the envious honor not the ties of nature, nor spare even themselves." The Christian, therefore, should guard against nothing more than the snares of envy.

### INSTRUCTION ON THE VICE OF ENVY, AND THE MEANS TO OVERCOME IT.

**E**NVY is either a pain, a kind of sadness because of another's prosperity, or joy at his misfortunes. He is **envious** who is inwardly disturbed, grieved, and sad, if his neighbor possesses more, is more honored, or gains more than he, or who rejoices if his neighbor is injured, if shame falls upon him, or if he loses his reputation. Envy is felt towards those who occupy a higher position, because the envious one cannot become their equal; towards those of inferior condition, because he fears they will become equal to him; and to his equals, because he possesses no more than they. Such was the envy of Saul towards David, of the Pharisees towards Christ.

Envy is one of the most detestable of vices, because it is so frequently found on earth, and none other so destroys individual happiness, as well as the welfare of whole nations. Its consequences are often enmity, vengeance and murder. It at once opposes **the love of our neighbor**, and is therefore hated by God.

To exterminate the roots of this vice as soon as they germinate in the heart, it is well to consider often:

I. That envious people are like the devil who is dissatisfied at our good works, and who feels the greatest pain on account of them, because of the eternal reward



promised, and which he has lost, and can never regain. St. Augustine says: "O, that God would turn away the pest of envy from all Christian souls, for envy is a diabolical crime, the only one of which the devil is in an unforgiving manner properly guilty, because as a fallen spirit, he most furiously envies man who remains standing;"

II. That nothing is gained by the vice, but the envious one embitters his own life; peace of heart abandons him, whether he sees his neighbor in prosperity or in adversity;

III. That the envious one loses the benefit of all his neighbor's good works, because he has no love for him, and is not in the state of grace; he becomes constantly poorer and more corrupt the more his neighbor increases in good works. This St. Gregory indicates, when he says: "Love, by its love has a share in the good deeds of its neighbor, but envy transforms them, by its hatred into so many heart-sores;"

IV. That envy devours the heart, consumes the body, tortures the spirit and frightens away all joy from the soul. The Scriptures call envy the rottenness of the bones; (*Prov.* xiv. 30.) some Fathers of the Church call it the judge and executioner of man, because the envious person destroys himself by his own self-torments; finally,

V. That envy is generally born of the mother of all sins: Pride. As a proud person cannot endure any one who stands higher than he, has more than he, or makes himself equal to him, so envy springs up in his heart towards those who excel him, who gain or possess more than he. Strive therefore, to practise the virtue of humility, and consider that God regards not the dignity, nor the wealth, nor the honor of man, but the humble, meek, and loving heart, which he makes still richer with His blessings.

ASPIRATION. O Jesus who wast made to suffer so much by the envy of the Pharisees, grant, that I may despise this vice, and always love my neighbor, thus imitating Thee who didst shed Thy blood for love of me.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxi. 33—46.) At that time, Jesus spoke to the multitude of the Jews, and to the chief priests this parable: There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and made a hedge round about it, and dug in it a press, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a strange coun-



try. And when the time of the fruits drew nigh, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits thereof. And the husbandmen, laying hands on his servants, beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants more than the former: and they did to them in like manner. And last of all he sent to them his Son, saying: They will reverence my son. But the husbandmen seeing the son, said among themselves: This is the heir, come, let us kill him, and we shall have his inheritance. And taking him they cast him forth out of the vineyard, and killed him. When therefore the lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do to those husbandmen? They say to him: He will bring those evil men to an evil end: and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen, that shall render him the fruit in due season. Jesus saith to them: Have you never read in the Scriptures: The stone, which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? By the Lord this hath been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes: therefore I say to you, that the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation yielding the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder. And when the chief priests and Pharisees: had heard his parables, they knew that he spoke of them. And seeking to lay hands on him they feared the multitudes: because they held him as a prophet.

**EXPLANATION.** The householder in this parable is God; the vineyard is the Church before and after Christ; the hedge, the protection of God's providence and His angels; the wine-press is the word of God, which exhorts man to good; the tower, the earthly protection of superiors; the husbandmen are the priests, the kings, the judges and the learned; the going away of the householder represents the invisibility of God; the time of the fruits, that is, of good



works, should always be at hand, because we should always be serving God, and producing the fruit of good works; the servants are the prophets and apostles; the son, Christ Jesus whom the Jews crucified, and whom sinners and the enemies of Christianity still crucify. The kingdom of God was, therefore, taken away from the Jews, and will be taken from sinners and Christ's enemies, because they despise and persecute the Lord, and by their sins crucify Him anew. Woe to you, if you acknowledge not the truth, and if you bring not forth good fruits!

### SATURDAY IN THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Gen.* xxvii. 6—40.) IN THOSE DAYS, Rebecca said to her son Jacob: I heard thy father talking with Esau thy brother, and saying to him: Bring me of thy hunting, and make me meats that I may eat, and bless thee in the sight of the Lord, before I die. Now therefore, my son, follow my counsel: and go thy way to the flock, bring me two kids of the best, that I may make of them meat for thy father, such as he gladly eateth: which when thou hast brought in, and he hath eaten, he may bless thee before he die. And he answered her: Thou knowest that Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am smooth: if my father shall feel me, and perceive it, I fear lest he will think, I would have mocked him, and I shall bring upon me a curse instead of a blessing. And his mother said to him: Upon me be this curse, my son: only hear thou my voice, and go, fetch me the things which I have said. He went, and brought, and gave them to his mother. She dressed meats such as she knew his father liked. And she put on him very good garments of Esau, which she had at home with her: and the little skins of the kids she put about his hands, and covered the bare of his neck. And she gave him the savory meat, and delivered him bread that she had baked. Which when he had carried in, he said: My father? But he answered: I hear. Who art thou my



son? And Jacob said: I am Esau thy first-born: I have done as thou didst command me: arise, sit, and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said to his son: How couldst thou find it so quickly, my son? He answered: It was the will of God that what I sought came quickly in my way: and Isaac said: Come hither, that I may feel thee my son, and may prove whether thou be my son Esau, or no. He came near to his father, and when he had felt him, Isaac said: The voice indeed, is the voice of Jacob: but the hands, are the hands of Esau. And he knew him not, because his hairy hands made him like to the elder. Then blessing him, he said: Art thou my son Esau? He answered: I am. Then he said: Bring me the meats of thy hunting, my son, that my soul may bless thee. And when they were brought and he had eaten, he offered him wine also, which after he had drunk, he said to him: Come near me, and give me a kiss, my son. He came near, and kissed him. And immediately as he smelled the fragrant smell of his garments, blessing him, he said: Behold the smell of my son is as the smell of a plentiful field, which the Lord hath blessed. God give thee of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth, abundance of corn and wine. And let peoples serve thee, and tribes worship thee: be thou lord of thy brethren, and let thy mother's children bow down before thee. Cursed be he that curseth thee: and let him that blesseth thee be filled with blessings. Isaac had scarce ended his words, when Jacob being now gone out abroad, Esau came, and brought in to his father meats made of what he had taken in hunting, saying: Arise, my father, and eat of thy son's venison: that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said to him: Why! who art thou? He answered: I am thy first-born son Esau. Isaac was struck with fear, and



astonished exceedingly: and wondering beyond what can be believed, said: Who is he that even now brought me venison that he had taken, and I ate of all before thou camest? and I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed. Esau having heard his father's words, roared out with a great cry: and being in a consternation, said: Bless me also, my father. And he said: Thy brother came deceitfully and got thy blessing. But he said again: Rightly is his name called Jacob: for he hath supplanted me lo this second time: my first birth-right he took away before, and now this second time he hath stolen away my blessing. And again he said to his father: Hast thou not reserved me also a blessing? Isaac answered: I have appointed him thy lord, and have made all his brethren his servants: I have established him with corn and wine, and after this, what shall I do more for thee, my son? And Esau said to him: Hast thou only one blessing, father? I beseech thee bless me also. And when he wept with a loud cry, Isaac being moved, said to him: In the fat of the earth, and in the dew of heaven from above shall thy blessing be.

INSTRUCTION. The two sons of Isaac so esteemed their father's blessing, that one of them even strove to gain it by a fraud, and the other wept and lamented for losing it. Let us not disregard the blessing of our parents, because, as the Bible says, it builds houses for the children, while their curse uproots their foundations. (*Ecclus.* iii. 11.) If the Patriarch Jacob sinned by deceiving his father, we must bear in mind, that we are not to imagine ourselves secure, and that we should never let ourselves be led into even the smallest sin to gain any good however great.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xv. 11—32.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke to the Scribes and Pharisees this parable: A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father: Father, give me the portion of substance that falleth to me. And he divided unto them



his substance. And not many days after, the younger son gathering all together, went abroad into a far country, and there wasted his substance living riotously. And after he had spent all, there came a mighty famine in that country, and he began to be in want. And he went, and cleaved to one of the citizens of that country. And he sent him into his farm to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And returning to himself, he said: How many hired servants in my father's house abound with bread, and I here perish with hunger? I will arise, and will go to my father, and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee: I am not now worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And rising up he came to his father. And when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and running to him fell upon his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, I am not now worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants: Bring forth quickly the first robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat, and make merry: because this my son was dead, and is come to life again: was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. Now his eldest son was in the field; and when he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing: and he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said to him: Thy brother is come, and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe. And he was angry and would not go in. His father therefore coming out began to entreat him. And he answering, said to his



father: Behold, for so many years do I serve thee, and I have never transgressed thy commandment, and yet thou hast never given me a kid to make merry with my friends: but as soon as this thy son is come who hath devoured his substance with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. But he said to him: Son, thou art always with me, and all I have is thine: but it was fit that we should make merry and be glad, for this thy brother was dead, and is come to life again: he was lost and is found.

EXPLANATION. This parable was spoken principally for the Pharisees, who reproached our Saviour for the love He bore publicans and sinners; at the same time it is a trustworthy testimony, for all sinners, to the willingness of God, the best Father, to receive at all times, and with most compassionate love, every one, even the greatest sinner, who truly repents, forgiving and forgetting all his misdeeds. "The food of the Heavenly Father is our salvation," says St. Ambrose, "and His joy is our redemption from our sins." If you have sinned like the prodigal son, should not the unspeakable love and goodness of God move you to conversion?

## INSTRUCTION ON THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT, CALLED OCULI.



THE Introit of this day's Mass, which begins with the word *Oculi*, is the prayer of a soul imploring deliverance from the snares of the devil: My eyes are ever towards the Lord: for he shall pluck my feet out of the snare: look thou upon me, and have mercy on me, for I am alone and poor. To thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul: in thee, O my God, I put my trust: let me not be ashamed. (*Ps. xxiv.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. We beseech Thee, Almighty God, regard the desires of the humble, and stretch forth the right hand of Thy majesty to be our defence. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, &c.



EPISTLE. (*Ephes.* v. 1—9.) BRETHREN, be ye followers of God, as most dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath delivered himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God, for an odor of sweetness. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not so much as be named among you, as becometh saints; nor obscenity, nor foolish talking, nor scurrility, which is to no purpose; but rather giving of thanks: for know ye this, and understand, that no fornicator, nor unclean, nor covetous person, which is a serving of idols, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the anger of God upon the children of unbelief. Be ye not therefore partakers with them. For you were heretofore darkness; but now light in the Lord. Walk, then, as children of the light: for the fruit of the light is in all goodness, and justice, and truth.

EXPLANATION. The apostle requires us to imitate God, as good children imitate their father in well doing and in well-wishing; besides he declares that all covetousness, fornication, all disgraceful talk and equivocal jokes should be banished from Christian meetings, even that such things should not be so much as mentioned among us; because these vices unfailingly deprive us of heaven. He admonishes us not to let ourselves be deceived by the seducing words of those who seek to make these vices appear small, nothing more than pardonable human weaknesses; those who speak thus are the children of darkness and of the devil, they bring down the wrath of God upon themselves, and all who assent to their words. A Christian, a child of light, that is, of faith, should regard as a sin that which faith and conscience tell him is such, and must live according to their precepts and not by false judgment of the wicked. Should any one seek to lead you away, ask yourself, my Christian soul, whether you would dare appear with such a deed before the judgment-seat of God. Listen to the voice of your conscience, and let it decide, whether that which you are expected to do is good or bad, lawful or unlawful.



ASPIRATION. Place Thy fear, O God, before my mouth, that I may utter no vain, careless, much less improper and scandalous words, which may be the occasion of sin to my neighbor. Strengthen me, that I may not be deceived by flattering words, and become faithless to Thee.



GOSPEL. (*Luke xi. 14—28.* AT THAT TIME, Jesus was casting out a devil, and the same was dumb. And when he had cast out the devil, the dumb spoke, and the multitudes were in admiration at it. But some



of them said: He casteth out devils by Beelzebub the prince of devils. And others tempting, asked of him a sign from heaven. But he seeing their thoughts, said to them: Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation, and house upon house shall fall. And if Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because you say, that through Beelzebub I cast out devils. Now if I cast out devils by Beelzebub, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I by the finger of God cast out devils, doubtless the kingdom of God is come upon you. When a strong man armed keepeth his court, those things which he possesseth are in peace; but if a stronger than he come upon him, and overcome him, he will take away all his armor wherein he trusted, and will distribute his spoils. He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through places without water, seeking rest; and not finding, he saith, I will return into my house whence I came out: and when he is come, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then he goeth, and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and entering in they dwell there. And the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. And it came to pass, as he spoke these things, a certain woman from the crowd, lifting up her voice, said to him: Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the paps that gave thee suck. But he said: Yea rather blessed are they who hear the word of God, and keep it.

*Can a man be really possessed of a devil?*

It is the doctrine of the Catholic Church that the evil spirit most perniciously influences man in a twofold manner: by enticing his soul to sin, and then influencing his body



which he often entirely or partially possesses, manifesting himself by madness, convulsions, insanity, &c. Many texts of Scripture, and the writings of the Fathers speak of this possession. St. Cyprian writes: "We can expel the swarms of impure spirits, who for the ruin of the soul, enter into the bodies of men, and we can compel them to acknowledge their presence, by the force of powerful words." Possession takes place by the permission of God either for trial or as a punishment for sin committed, (i *Cor.* v. 5.) and the Church from her Head, Jesus, who expelled so many devils, has received the power of casting them out as He did. (*Mark* xvi. 17.; *Acts* v. 16., viii. 6. 7., xvi. 18. &c.) She however warns her ministers, the priests, who by their ordination have received the power to expel the evil spirits, to distinguish carefully between possession and natural sickness, that they may not be deceived, (*Rit. Rom.* §. 3. §. 5—10.) and the faithful should guard against looking upon every unusual, unhealthy appearance as an influence of Satan, and should give no ear to impostors, but in order not to be deceived, should turn to an experienced physician or to their pastor.

*What is understood by a dumb devil?*

The literal meaning of this is the evil enemy, who sometimes so torments those whom he possesses that they lose the power of speech; in a spiritual sense, we may understand it to mean the shame which the devil takes away from the sinner, when he commits the sin, but gives back again, as false shame, before confession, so that the sinner conceals the sin, and thereby falls deeper.

*How does Christ still cast out dumb devils?*

By His grace with which He inwardly enlightens the sinner, so that he becomes keenly aware that the sins which he has concealed in confession, will one day be known to the whole world, and thus encourages him to overcome his false shame. — "Be not ashamed to confess to one man," says St. Augustine, "that which you were not ashamed to do with one, perhaps, with many." Consider these words of the same saint: "Sincere confession subdues vice, conquers the evil one, shuts the door of hell, and opens the gates of paradise."

*How did Christ prove, that He did not cast out devils by Beelzebub?*

By showing that the kingdom of Satan could not stand, if one evil spirit were cast out by another; that they thus



reproached their own sons who also cast out devils, and had not been accused of doing so by power from Beelzebub; by His own life and works which were in direct opposition to the devil, and by which the devil's works were destroyed. — There is no better defence against calumny than an innocent life, and those who are slandered, find no better consolation than the thought of Christ who, notwithstanding His sanctity and His miracles, was not secure against calumnation.

*What is meant by the finger of God?*

The power of God, by which Christ expelled the evil spirits, proved himself God, and the promised Redeemer.

*Who is the strong man armed?*

The evil one is so called, because he still retains the power and intellect of the angels, and, practiced by long experience, seeks in different ways to injure man if God permits.

*How is the devil armed?*

With the evil desires of men, with the perishable riches, honors, and pleasures of this world, with which he entices us to evil, deceives us, and casts us into eternal fire.

*Who is the stronger one who took away the devil's armor?*

Christ the Lord who came into this world that He might destroy the works and the kingdom of the devil, to expel the prince of darkness, (*John* xii. 31.) and to redeem us from his power. "The devil," says St. Anthony, "is like a dragon caught by the Lord with the fishing-hook of the cross, tied with a halter like a beast of burden, chained like a fugitive slave, and his lips pierced through with a ring, so that he may not devour any of the faithful. Now he sighs, like a miserable sparrow, caught by Christ and turned to derision, and thrown under the feet of the Christians. He who flattered himself that he would possess the whole orbit of the earth, behold, he has to yield!"

*Why does Christ say: He who is not with me, is against me?*

These words were intended in the first place for the Pharisees who did not acknowledge Christ as the Messiah, would not fight with Him against Satan's power, but rather held the people back from reaching unity of faith and love



of Christ. Like the Pharisees, all heretical teachers who, by their false doctrines, draw the faithful from communion with Christ and His Church, are similar to the devil, the father of heresy and lies. May all those, therefore, who think they can serve Christ and the world at the same time, consider that between truth and falsehood, between Christ and the world, there is no middle path; that Christ requires decision, either with Him, or against Him, either eternal happiness with Him, or without Him, everlasting misery.

*Who are understood by the dry places through which the evil spirit wanders and finds no rest?*

"The dry places without water," says St. Gregory, "are the hearts of the just, who by the force of penance have drained the dampness of carnal desires." In such places the evil one indeed finds no rest, because there his malice finds no sympathy, and his wicked will no satisfaction.

*Why does the evil spirit say: I will return into my house?*

Because he is only contented there where he is welcomed and received: those who have purified their heart by confession, and driven Satan from it, but labor not to amend, again lose the grace of the Sacraments by sin, and thus void of virtue and grace, offer a beautiful and pleasant dwelling to the devil.

*Why is it said: The last state becomes worse than the first?*

Because a relapse generally draws more sins with it, and so it is said: the devil will return with seven other spirits more wicked than himself, by which may be understood the seven deadly sins, because after a relapse into sin conversion to God becomes more difficult, as a repeated return of the same sickness makes it harder to regain health; because by repetition sin easily becomes a habit and renders conversion almost impossible; because repeated relapses are followed by blindness of intellect, hardness of heart, and in the end eternal damnation.

*Why did the woman lift up her voice?*

This was by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost to shame the Pharisees who, blinded by pride, neither professed nor acknowledged the divinity of Christ, whilst this humble



woman not only confessed Jesus as God, but praised her who carried Him, whom heaven and earth cannot contain. Consider the great dignity of the Blessed Virgin, Mother of the Son of God, and hear her praises from the holy Fathers. St. Cyril thus salutes her: "Praise to thee, Blessed Mother of God: for thou art virginity itself, the sceptre of the true faith!" and St. Chrysostom: "Hail, O Mother, the throne, the glory, the heaven of the Church!" St. Ephrem: "Hail, only hope of the Fathers, herald of the apostles, glory of the martyrs, joy of the saints, and crown of the virgins, because of thy vast glory, and inaccessible light!"

*Why did Christ call those happy who hear the word of God and keep it?*

Because, as has been already said, it is not enough for salvation to hear the word of God, but it must also be practiced. Because Mary, the tender Mother of Jesus, did this most perfectly, Christ terms her more happy in it, than in having conceived, borne, and nursed Him.

SUPPLICATION. O Lord Jesus! true Light of the world, enlighten the eyes of my soul, that I may never be induced by the evil one to conceal a sin, through false shame, in the confessional, that on the day of general judgment my sins may not be published to the whole world. Strengthen me, O Jesus, that I may resist the arms of the devil by a penitent life, and especially by scorning the fear of man and worldly considerations, and guard against lapsing into sin, that I may not be lost, but through Thy merits may be delivered from all dangers and obtain heaven.

#### MONDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (iv *Kings* v. 1—15.) IN THOSE DAYS, Naaman, general of the army of the King of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honorable: for by him the Lord gave deliverance to Syria: and he was a valiant man and rich, but a leper. Now there had gone out robbers from Syria, and had led away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid, and she waited upon Naaman's wife, and she said to her



mistress : I wish my master had been with the prophet, that is in Samaria : he would certainly have healed him of the leprosy, which he hath. Then Naaman went in to his lord, and told him, saying : Thus and thus said the girl that came from the land of Israel. And the King of Syria said to him : Go, and I will send a letter to the King of Israel : and he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment, and brought the letter to the King of Israel, in these words : When thou shalt receive this letter, know that I have sent to thee Naaman my servant, that thou mayest heal him of his leprosy. And when the King of Israel had read the letter, he rent his garments, and said : Am I God, to be able to kill and give life, that this man hath sent to me, to heal a man of his leprosy ? mark, and see how he seeketh occasions against me. And when Eliseus the man of God had heard this, to wit, that the King of Israel had rent his garments, he sent to him, saying : Why hast thou rent thy garments ? let him come to me and let him know that there is a prophet in Israel. So Naaman came with his horses and chariots, and stood at the door of the house of Eliseus : and Eliseus sent a messenger to him, saying : Go, and wash seven times in the Jordan, and thy flesh shall recover health, and thou shalt be clean. Naaman was angry, and went away, saying : I thought he would have come out to me, and standing would have invoked the name of the Lord his God, and touched with his hand the place of the leprosy, and healed me. Are not the Abana, and the Pharphar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel, that I may wash in them, and be made clean ? So as he turned, and was going away with indignation, his servant came to him, and said to him : Father, if the prophet had bid thee do



some great thing, surely thou shouldst have done it: how much rather what he now hath said to thee: Wash, and thou shalt be clean? Then he went down, and washed in the Jordan seven times, according to the word of the man of God, and his flesh was restored, like the flesh of a little child, and he was made clean. And returning to the man of God with all his train, he came, and stood before him, and said: In truth I know there is no other God in all the earth, but only in Israel.

INSTRUCTION. The washing of Naaman the leper in the river Jordan, as required by the prophet Eliseus, by which the leprosy was healed, is a type of the holy sacraments of Baptism and Penance, "By which," as St. Ambrose says, "the leprosy of the soul, sin, is removed." Make frequent use of the holy Sacrament of Penance that your soul may become ever purer and more agreeable to God.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* iv. 23—30.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to the Pharisees: Doubtless you will say to me this similitude: Physician heal thyself: as great things as we have heard done in Carpharnaum, do also here in thy own country. And he said: Amen I say to you, that no prophet is accepted in his own country. In truth I say to you, there were many widows in the days of Elias in Israel, when heaven was shut up three years and six months: when there was a great famine throughout all the earth: and to none of them was Elias sent, but to Sarephta of Sidon, to a widow-woman. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet: and none of them was cleansed but Naaman the Syrian. And all they in the synagogue; hearing these things, were filled with anger. And they rose up and thrust him out of the city: and they brought him to the brow of the hill, whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them, went his way.



**EXPLANATION.** The Nazarenes despised our Saviour because of His humble birth, but when they learned of His miracles, they asked that He would also heal the sick and injured of His native place. But He refused their request, because they were without faith. — See from this how important it is, if you desire not to be abandoned by God, as were the Nazarenes, but to be aided by Him, that you should have a lively faith. This is a gift of God, for which you should daily pray.

### TUESDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT.

**LESSON.** (iv *Kings* iv. 1—7.) IN THOSE DAYS, A certain woman of the wives of the prophets cried to Eliseus, saying: Thy servant my husband is dead, and thou knowest that thy servant was one that feared the Lord, and behold the creditor is come to take away my two sons to serve him. And Eliseus said to her: What wilt thou have me do for thee? Tell me, what hast thou in thy house? And she answered: I thy handmaid have nothing in my house but a little oil, to anoint me. And he said to her: Go, borrow of all thy neighbors empty vessels not a few. And go in, and shut thy door, when thou art within, with thy sons: and pour out thereof into all those vessels: and when they are full, take them away. So the woman went, and shut the door upon her, and upon her sons: they brought her the vessels, and she poured in. And when the vessels were full, she said to her son: Bring me yet a vessel. And he answered: I have no more. And the oil stood. And she came, and told the man of God. And he said: Go, sell the oil, and pay thy creditor: and thou and thy sons live of the rest.

**INSTRUCTION.** As Eliseus the Prophet aided the widow to pay her debts by increasing her small quantity of oil, so Jesus, says St. Augustine, the true Eliseus, by His grace and mercy, and with the oil of love, aids the Church to pay the debt of sin. — Use this grace as a child of the Church, to liquidate your debt of sin, by contrition, and beseech God through the love and merits of His



Son, to cancel your debt. To Mary Magdalen much was forgiven, because she loved much.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xviii. 15—22.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: If thy brother shall offend against thee, go, and rebuke him between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou shalt gain thy brother; but if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may stand. And if he will not hear them: tell the Church; and if he will not hear the Church: let him be to thee as the heathen and publican. Amen, I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven. Again I say to you, that if two of you shall consent upon earth, concerning anything whatsoever they shall ask, it shall be done to them by my Father who is in heaven. For where there are two or three gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Then came Peter unto him, and said: Lord, how often shall my brother offend against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith to him: I say not to thee, till seven times: but till seventy times seven times.

EXPLANATION. There are, as Jesus teaches, four degrees or points to be observed in the fraternal correction of your neighbor, when he has scandalized you by some wrong act: first, rebuke him, alone; secondly, if he will not listen to this, take with you two or three well disposed, impartial witnesses, that they may unite with you in warning and exhorting him; thirdly, if still he will not listen, refer to the pastors, the bishops, and priests of the Church, that they may interfere and remove the scandal; fourthly, if he will not hear even these, then let him be excluded from the communion of the faithful, which Jesus leaves with the pastors of the Church to do, for to them He gives the power to bind and to loose. Such a one must then be avoided, and no communication held with him, but he is to be prayed for, that God may open his eyes. To the words of Jesus, that we should seventy times seven times forgive one who has offended us, "I venture to add," says St. Augustine,



**"if your brother has offended you seventy-seven, even a hundred times, forgive him; yes, forgive him as often as he offends you; for if Christ found thousands of sins on earth, and yet pardoned them all, do you also not refuse mercy."**

**WEDNESDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT.**

**LESSON.** (*Exod. xx. 12—24.*) **THUS** saith the Lord God: Honor thy father and thy mother, that thou mayest be long-lived upon the land, which the Lord thy God will give thee. Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house: neither shalt thou desire his wife, nor his servant, nor his handmaid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his. And all the people saw the voices and the flames, and the sound of the trumpet, and the mount smoking: and being terrified and struck with fear they stood afar off, saying to Moses: Speak thou to us, and we will hear: let not the Lord speak to us, lest we die. And Moses said to the people: Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that the dread of him might be in you, and you should not sin. And the people stood afar off. But Moses went to the dark cloud wherein God was. And the Lord said to Moses: Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel: You have seen that I have spoken to you from heaven. You shall not make gods of silver, nor shall you make to yourselves gods of gold. You shall make an altar of earth unto me, and you shall offer upon it your holocausts and peace-offerings, your sheep and oxen, in every place where the memory of my name shall be.

**EXPLANATION.** God gave the commandments, which are written in the heart of every human being, (*Rom. ii. 15.*) to the Jews amid thunder and lightning, that, as they were a hardened people, they might be urged by fear to **keep** them. But the true Christian keeps the commandments **for**



love of God, for Christ says: "Who keeps my commandments, he it is, that loves me;" (*John* xiv. 21.) and St. Augustine writes: "He who has my commandments in his memory, and keeps them on his way; who has them in his words, and keeps them in his deeds; who so has them, that he hears them and keeps them, so that he fulfils them and perseveres in them, he it is that loves me." Never say that you love God, if you do not keep His commandments.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xv. 1—20.) AT THAT TIME, The scribes and Pharisees came from Jerusalem to Jesus, saying: Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the ancients? For they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answering, said to them: Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for your tradition? For God said: Honor thy father and mother; and: He that shall curse father or mother, let him die the death. But you say: Whosoever shall say to father or mother, the gift whatsoever proceedeth from me, shall profit thee: and he shall not honor his father or his mother: and you have made void the commandment of God for your tradition. Hypocrites, well hath Isaias prophesied of you, saying: This people honoreth me with their lips: but their heart is far from me. And in vain do they worship me, teaching doctrines and commandments of men. And having called together the multitudes unto him, he said to them: Hear ye and understand. Not that which goeth into the mouth, defileth a man: but what cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. Then came his disciples, and said to him: Dost thou know that the Pharisees, when they heard this word, were scandalized? But he answering said: Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they are blind, and leaders of the blind; and if the blind lead the blind, both fall into the pit. And Peter answering said to him: Expound to us this parable. But he said: Are you also yet without understanding? Do you not understand,



that whatsoever entereth into the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the privy? But the things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and those things defile a man: for from the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies; these are the things that defile a man. But to eat with unwashed hands, doth not defile a man.

INSTRUCTION. Unbelievers, and also lukewarm Catholics, reproach the Church among other things for imposing upon the faithful commands not made by Christ, such as abstinence from meat on fast-days, quoting the words: Not that which goeth into the mouth, defileth a man. It is true, no food taken in moderation and with the pure intention of strengthening and preserving the physical powers, defiles a man, but the interior bad disposition, the disobedience to the Church which Christ has commanded us to hear, this defiles a man, and makes him commit sin. Be obedient to your holy Church which, directed by the Holy Spirit of God, as a good mother, seeks always what is best for you.

#### THURSDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Jer.* vii. 1—7.) IN THOSE DAYS, The word that came to Jeremias from the Lord, saying: Stand in the gate of the house of the Lord, and proclaim there this word, and say: Hear ye the word of the Lord, all ye men of Juda, that enter in at these gates, to adore the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts the God of Israel: Make your ways, and your doings good: and I will dwell with you in this place. Trust not in lying words, saying: The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, it is the temple of the Lord. For if you will order well your ways and your doings: if you will execute judgment between a man and his neighbor, if you oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, and walk not after strange gods to your own hurt: I will dwell with you in this place; in the



land, which I gave to your fathers from the beginning and for evermore, saith the Lord Almighty.

**EXPLANATION.** The Jews believed themselves acceptable to God, because they had, in Jerusalem, the temple of the true God, and observed the rules prescribed for the external service offered there. This mistake is exposed by the prophet who, by the command of God, shows them, that only he finds favor in the eyes of God who unites with this outward observance, the intention of pleasing God **only, and practices works of justice and mercy.** Thus many



**Catholics observe everything belonging to the external worship and the customs of the Church, but at the same**



time pay no attention to real conversion of the heart. Therefore, being a member of the Church, and showing yourself outwardly such, will not make you holy and save you, but you must live **piously and virtuously** according to the spirit of the Church.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* iv. 38—44.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus rising up out of the synagogue, went into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever: and they besought him for her. And standing over her, he commanded the fever, and it left her. And immediately rising, she ministered to them. And when the sun was down: all they that had any sick with divers diseases, brought them to him. But he laying his hands on every one of them, healed them. And devils went out from many, crying out and saying: Thou art the Son of God: and rebuking them he suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ. And when it was day, going out he went into a desert place: and the multitudes sought him, and came unto him: and they detained him that he should not depart from them. To whom he said: To other cities also I must preach the kingdom of God: for therefore am I sent. And he was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.

INSTRUCTION. By the fever of St. Peter's mother-in-law, which Christ cured, St. Ambrose understands the fever-heat of impure lust. If you, Christian soul, suffer from this dangerous fever, bring Christ into the house of your soul, that is, receive Him often in holy Communion, which is the **crown** of the elect, the wine from which the virgins spring. (*Zach.* ix. 17.) The virginal flesh of the Lord extinguishes the heat of lust, and enkindles the fire of the pure love of God; this the Scriptures teach, and daily experience proves.

#### FRIDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Num.* xx. 2—13.) IN THOSE DAYS, The children of Israel came together against Moses and Aaron: and making a sedition, they said: Give us



water to drink. And Moses and Aaron leaving the multitude, went into the tabernacle of the covenant, and fell flat upon the ground, and cried to the Lord, and said: O Lord God hear the cry of this people, and open to them thy treasure, a fountain of living water, that being satisfied, they may cease to murmur. And the glory of the Lord appeared over them. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Take the rod, and assemble the people together, thou and Aaron thy brother, and speak to the rock before them, and it shall yield waters. And when thou hast brought forth water out of the rock, all the multitude and their cattle shall drink. Moses therefore took the rod, which was before the Lord, as he had commanded him, and having gathered together the multitude before the rock, he said to them: Hear ye rebellious and incredulous: can we bring you forth water out of this rock? And when Moses had lifted up his hand, and struck the rock twice with the rod, there came forth water in great abundance, so that the people and their cattle drank. And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron: Because you have not believed me, to sanctify me before the children of Israel, you shall not bring these peoples into the land, which I will give them. This is the water of contradiction, where the children of Israel strove with words against the Lord, and he was sanctified in them.

INSTRUCTION. Great and innumerable were the graces God had already given to the people of Israel, and little was their gratitude for them. How many graces for body and soul, has God also given you, and where are the thanks you owe Him? Will you be worse than the beasts who have not reason? "Whose face," says St. Ambrose, "will not blush that he has not thanked his benefactor, when he sees that even the animals fly from the name of ungrateful?"

GOSPEL. (*John* iv. 5—24.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus came to a city of Samaria which is called Sichar: near the land which Jacob gave to his son Joseph.



Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus, therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well. It was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus saith to her: Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone into the city to buy meats.) Then that Samaritan woman saith to him: How dost thou, being a Jew, ask of me to drink, who am a Samaritan woman? For the Jews do not communicate with the Samaritans. Jesus answered, and said to her: If thou didst know the gift of God, and who he is that saith to thee, Give me to drink: thou perhaps wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith to him: Sir, thou hast nothing wherein to draw, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered, and said to her: Whosoever drinketh of this water, shall thirst again: but he that shall drink of the water that I will give him, shall not thirst for ever: but the water that I will give him, shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into life everlasting. The woman saith to him: Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst: nor come hither to draw. Jesus saith to her: Go, call thy husband and come hither. The woman answered and said: I have no husband. Jesus said to her: Thou hast said well, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast, is not thy husband: this thou hast said truly. The woman saith to him: Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers adored on this mountain, and you say, that at Jerusalem is the place where men must adore. Jesus saith to her: Woman believe me, that the hour cometh, when you shall neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem adore the Father. You adore



that which you know not: we adore that which we know, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth. For the Father also seeketh such to adore him. God is a spirit: and they that adore him, must adore him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith to him: I know that the Messias cometh, (who is called Christ:) therefore when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith to her: I am he, who am speaking with thee. And immediately his disciples came: and they wondered that he talked with the woman. Yet no man said: What seekest thou, or why talkest thou with her? The woman therefore left her water-pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men there: Come, and see a man who **has** told me all things whatsoever I have **done**: Is not he the Christ? They went therefore out of the city, and came unto him. In the mean time the disciples prayed him, saying: Rabbi, eat. But he said to them: I have meat to eat which you know not. The disciples therefore said one to another: Hath any man brought him to eat? Jesus saith to them: My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, that I may perfect his work. Do not you say, there are yet four months, and **then** the harvest cometh? Behold I say to you: lift up your eyes, and see the countries, for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth, receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life everlasting: that both he that soweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice together. For in this is **the** saying true: that it is one man that soweth, and it is another that reapeth. I have sent you to reap that in which you did not labor: others have labored, and you have entered into their labors. Now of that city many of the Samaritans believed in him, for the word of the woman giving testimony: He told me all



things whatsoever I have done. So when the Samaritans were come to him, they desired him that he would tarry there. And he abode there two days. And many more believed in him because of his own word. And they said to the woman: We now believe, not for thy saying: for we ourselves have heard him, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.

**EXPLANATION.** The living water which Jesus says, quenches thirst forever, is the stream of grace, continually flowing from the Sacraments of the Church, from the inexhaustible merits of Christ, which purifies us from sin, extinguishes the fire of evil desires, quiets the thirst for eternal joys, and renders our will fertile in the performance of good works. As often as we receive the holy Sacraments with lively faith in Jesus, and with the ardent desire for His graces, so often do we drink from this stream, to which we are invited by the Church by these words: "You shall draw waters with joy, out of the Saviour's fountains." (*Isai. xii. 13.*) When saying that God is a spirit, who must therefore be adored in spirit and in truth, Jesus rebukes the Jews who, as has been already observed, directed their attention only to the external ceremonies and customs of the Church, and forgot the true conversion of their hearts, as well as the Samaritans who built a temple on Mount Garizim, arbitrarily arranged their form of worship, and frequently mixed it with heathen superstition. The will of His Father, to redeem and sanctify man, was the food of Jesus. So you also let your nourishment be the will of God who requires of you to love Him with all your heart, and to keep His commandments.

#### SATURDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT.

**LESSON.** (*Dan. xiii. 1—62.*) IN THOSE DAYS, There was a man that dwelt in Babylon, and his name was Joachim: and he took a wife whose name was Susanna, the daughter of Helcias, a very beautiful woman, and one that feared God: for her parents being just, had instructed their daughter according to the law of Moses. Now Joachim was very rich, and had an orchard near his house: and the Jews resorted to him,



because he was the most honorable of them all. And there were two of the ancients of the people appointed judges that year: of whom the Lord said: Iniquity came out from Babylon from the ancient judges, that seemed to govern the people. These men frequented the house of Joachim, and all that had any matters of judgment came to them. And when the people departed away at noon, Susanna went in, and walked in her husband's orchard. And the old men saw her going in every day, and walking: and they were inflamed with lust towards her: and they perverted their own mind and turned away their eyes that they might not look unto heaven, nor remember just judgments. So they were both wounded with the love of her, yet they did not make known their grief one to the other: for they were ashamed to declare to one another their lust, being desirous to have to do with her: and they watched carefully every day to see her. And one said to the other: Let us now go home, for it is dinner time. So going out, they departed one from another. And turning back again, they came both to the same place: and asking one another the cause, acknowledged their lust: and then they agreed upon a time when they might find her alone. And it fell out, as they watched a fit day, she went in on a time, as yesterday and the day before, with two maids only, and was desirous to wash herself in the orchard: for it was hot weather: and there was nobody there, but the two old men that had hid themselves and were considering her. So she said to the maids: Bring me oil, and washing balls, and shut the doors of the orchard, that I may wash me. And they did as she bade them: and they shut the doors of the orchard, and went out by a back door to fetch what she had commanded them; and they knew not that the elders were hid within. Now when the maids were gone



forth, the two elders arose, and ran to her, and said: Behold the doors of the orchard are shut, and nobody seeth us, and we are in love with thee; wherefore consent to us, and lie with us; but if thou wilt not, we will bear witness against thee, that a young man was with thee, and therefore thou didst send away thy maids from thee. Susanna sighed and said: I am straitened on every side: for if I do this thing, it is death to me: and if I do it not, I shall not escape your hands. But it is better for me to fall into your hands without doing it, than to sin in the sight of the Lord. With that Susanna cried out with a loud voice: and the elders also cried out against her. And one of them ran to the door of the orchard, and opened it. So when the servants of the house heard the cry in the orchard, they rushed in by the back door to see what was the matter. But after the old men had spoken, the servants were greatly ashamed: for never had there been any such word said of Susanna. And on the next day, when the people were come to Joachim her husband, the two elders also came full of their wicked device against Susanna, to put her to death. And they said before the people: Send to Susanna, daughter of Helcias the wife of Joachim. And presently they sent. And she came with her parents, and children, and all her kindred. Now Susanna was exceeding delicate, and beautiful to behold. But those wicked men commanded that her face should be uncovered (for she was covered) that so at least they might be satisfied with her beauty. Therefore her friends, and all her acquaintances wept. But the two elders rising up in the midst of the people, laid their hands upon her head. And she weeping looked up to heaven: for her heart had confidence in the Lord. And the elders said: As we walked in the orchard alone, this woman came in with two maids: and shut the doors



of the orchard, and sent away the maids from her. Then a young man that was there hid came to her, and lay with her. But we that were in the corner of the orchard, seeing this wickedness, ran up to them, and we saw them lie together. And as for him, we could not take him, because he was stronger than we, and opening the doors he leaped out: but having taken this woman, we asked who the young man was, but she would not tell us: of this thing we are witnesses. The multitude believed them as being the elders and judges of the people, and they condemned her to death. Then Susanna cried out with a loud voice, and said: O eternal God, who knowest hidden things, who knowest all things before they come to pass, thou knowest that they have borne false witness against me: and behold I must die, whereas I have done none of these things, which these men have maliciously forged against me. And the Lord heard her voice. And when she was led to be put to death, the Lord raised up the holy spirit of a young boy, whose name was Daniel: and he cried out with a loud voice: I am clear from the blood of this woman. Then all the people turning towards him, said: What meaneth this word that thou hast spoken? But he standing in the midst of them, said: Are ye so foolish, ye children of Israel, that without examination or knowledge of the truth, ye have condemned a daughter of Israel? Return to judgment, for they have borne false witness against her. So all the people turned again in haste, and the old men said to him: Come, and sit thou down among us, and shew it us: seeing God hath given thee the honor of old age. And Daniel said to them: Separate these two far from one another, and I will examine them. So when they were put asunder one from the other, he called one of them, and said to him: O thou that art grown old in evil



days, now are thy sins come out, which thou hast committed before: in judging unjust judgments, oppressing the innocent, and letting the guilty to go free, whereas the Lord saith: The innocent and the just thou shalt not kill. Now then, if thou sawest her, tell me under what tree thou sawest them conversing together. He said: Under a mastic tree. And Daniel said: Well hast thou lied against thy own head: for behold the Angel of God having received the sentence of him, shall cut thee in two. And having put him aside, he commanded that the other should come, and he said to him: O thou seed of Chanaan, and not of Juda, beauty hath deceived thee, and lust hath perverted thy heart: thus did you do to the daughters of Israel, and they for fear conversed with you: but a daughter of Juda would not abide your wickedness. Now therefore tell me, under what tree didst thou take them conversing together. And he answered: Under a holm tree. And Daniel said to him: Well hast thou also lied against thy own head: for the Angel of the Lord waiteth with a sword to cut thee in two, and to destroy thee. With that all the assembly cried out with a loud voice, and they blessed God who saveth them that trust in him. And they rose up against the two elders (for Daniel had convicted them of false witness by their own mouth) and they did to them as they had maliciously dealt against their neighbor, to fulfil the law of Moses: and they put them to death, and innocent blood was saved in that day.

INSTRUCTION. All the impious who walk as did these two judges inflamed with lust, say: Who seeth me? Darkness compasseth me about, and the walls cover me, and no man seeth me: whom do I fear? The Most High will not remember my sins, (*Ecclus.* xxiii. 25. 26.) and St. Bernard answers them: "Be it so, no man sees you, not one. You are seen by the evil angel; you are seen by the good angel. You are seen by Him who



is greater than good or evil angel, God. You are seen by the accuser; the multitude of witnesses see you; the Judge Himself at whose judgment-seat you will one day stand, sees you; to be willing to do wrong under His eyes, is as insane as it is terrible to fall into the hands of the living God." Take these words earnestly to heart, O Christian, and like Susanna let not the fear of God ever depart from your heart, for it is ever better to lose all, even life, than by grievous sin to lose one's own soul.

GOSPEL. (*John* viii. 1—11.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus went to mount Olivet: and early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came to him, and sitting down he taught them. And the Scribes and Pharisees bring unto him a woman taken in adultery: and they set her in the midst, and said to him: Master, this woman was even now taken in adultery. Now Moses in the law commanded us to stone such a one. But what sayest thou? And this they said tempting him, that they might accuse him. But Jesus, bowing himself down, wrote with his finger on the ground. When therefore they continued asking him, he lifted up himself and said to them: He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again stooping down, he wrote on the ground. But they hearing this, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest: and Jesus alone remained, and the woman standing in the midst. Then Jesus lifting up himself, said to her: Woman, where are they that accused thee? Hath no man condemned thee? Who said: No man, Lord. And Jesus said: Neither will I condemn thee. Go, and now sin no more.

EXPLANATION. In the preceding lesson the example of a pious, chaste woman, whom God wonderfully rescued from the hands of her malicious enemies, is placed before us: in the gospel is shown a great, but penitent sinner, whom Christ rescued from eternal death by forgiving her sins. O how merciful is Jesus, and how unmerciful are the Christians who, like the Pharisees, at once condemn every sinner, not considering that they themselves are the greatest of sinners, and in need of mercy; if sinners truly repent



they may become the greatest of saints. "What does God more abhor and abominate," says St. Dorotheus, "than rash judgment, as all our forefathers declare? Indeed, they counted nothing worse, nothing more hateful, than the condemnation of one's neighbor." Remember, O Christian, that to Him only belongs judgment, to whom the Father has given all judgment, to the Son of God, and do not forget the words of the Apostle: He that thinketh himself to stand, let him take heed, lest he fall. (i *Cor.* x. 12.)

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT. (LÆTARE.)

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**T**HE Introit of this day's Mass, which begins with the word Lætare, is as follows: Rejoice, O Jerusalem, and come together all you that love her; rejoice with joy you that have been in sorrow: that you may exult, and be filled from the breasts of your consolation. (*Isai.* lxvi. 10. 11.) I rejoiced at the things that were said to me: We shall go into the house of the Lord. (*Ps.* cxxi. 1.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, almighty God, that we who justly suffer for our deeds may be relieved by the consolation of Thy grace. Through &c.

EPISTLE. (*Gal.* iv. 22—31.) BRETHREN, it is written that Abraham had two sons; the one by a bond-woman and the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bond-woman was born according to the flesh; but he of the free-woman was by promise: which things are said by an allegory. For these are the two testaments. The one from Mount Sina, engendering unto bondage, which is Agar: for Sina is a mountain in Arabia, which hath affinity to that Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But that Jerusalem which is above is free, which is our mother. For it is written: Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not: break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for



many are the children of the desolate, more than of her that hath a husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born according to the flesh persecuted him that was after the spirit, so also it is now. But what saith the scripture? Cast out the bond-woman and her son: for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman. So, then, brethren, we are not the children of the bond-woman, but of the free: by the freedom wherewith Christ hath made us free.

**EXPLANATION.** It was the common custom, in the days of the patriarchs, for a man to have more than one wife. This was permitted by God, partly because they and their descendants would hardly have been satisfied with one marriage, (*Matt.* xix. 8.) partly because bigamy was a means of promoting the increase of the people of Israel, typical of the future increase of the children of God. Thus Abraham had two wives, who had each a son; of these Ismael was born to Abraham from his bond-woman Agar, in the natural way; the other, Isaac, the son of the free wife Sara, was born in a supernatural manner according to the promise, (*Gen.* xviii. 11. 14.) that she by the grace of God, although aged, would give birth to a son. These two women with their sons were types, as St. Paul says, of the two Testaments: Agar the bond-woman typified the Old, Sara, the free-woman, the New Testament; the son of Agar, the Jews, the son of Sara, the Christians; for the Jews, like Ismael, are descendants of Abraham by natural descent, but the Christians, like Isaac, by grace. The Old Testament gave birth only to servants; for the Jews obeyed the commandments of God through fear of punishment, and in hope of temporal reward; the New Testament, the Jerusalem from above that is, the Christian Church, gives birth to children who willingly and through love obey the commandments of God. Although the Christian Church, the New Jerusalem, chosen from heathenism, was in the beginning barren, as was Sara, she gives birth, by the grace of God and through His apostles, to more children than the Jewish Church, which was so long the Church of God, that is, more were converted to Christianity from the Gentiles than from the Jews. The latter even hated and persecuted the Christians, as did Ismael his brother Isaac.



For their hardness of heart they were cast out by God, like Agar and her son; that is, after the destruction of Jerusalem the Jews were dispersed to all parts of the world. Let us, therefore, give thanks to God, that through Jesus we have become the free children of our heavenly Father, who through love fulfil His holy will by which we shall be saved.

ASPIRATION. Give me the grace, O Jesus, that by prayer and fasting, and patience in all adversities and persecutions, I may be made less unworthy of Thy passion; that I may not, one day, be cast out by Thee, but become worthy of Thy divine promise and Thy eternal consolation in the heavenly Jerusalem.

GOSPEL. (*John* vi. 1—15.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is that of Tiberias; and a great multitude followed him, because they saw the miracles which he did on them that were diseased. Jesus therefore went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. Now the pasch, the festival day of the Jews, was near at hand. When Jesus therefore had lifted up his eyes, and seen that a very great multitude cometh to him, he said to Philip: Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat? And this he said to try him; for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered: Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, saith to him: There is a boy here that hath five barley loaves and two fishes: but what are these among so many? Then Jesus said: Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. The men therefore sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to them that were set down: in like manner also of the fishes, as much as they would. And when they were filled, he said to his disciples: Gather up the fragments that remain, lest they be lost. They gathered up, therefore,



INSTRUCTION ON THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.



and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above to them that had eaten. Now those men, when they had seen what a miracle Jesus had done, said: This is of a truth the prophet that is to come into the world. Jesus therefore when he knew that they would come to take him by force, and make him king, fled again into the mountain himself alone.

*Why did Christ try St. Philip?*

To test his faith and confidence; to instruct us that before seeking supernatural means, we should first look for



natural ways of providing; that the miracle of the multiplying of the loaves should be more marvellous to the people from having seen there was no provision; and that we may learn to trust in God, who is a helper in due time in tribulation. (*Ps. ix. 10.*)

*What signs did Christ make use of in this miracle, and why?*

According to St. Matthew (xiv. 19.) He lifted up His eyes to heaven, by which He showed that all good gifts come from above; He gave thanks, thus teaching us to give thanks to God for all His blessings. "The table," says St. Chrysostom, "that is approached and is left with prayer will never know want, but the more richly yield its gifts." He blessed the bread showing us that the divine blessing increases all things.

*Why did Christ require them to gather up the fragments that were left?*

That they should not be wasted or destroyed; that the greatness of the miracle should be made evident by the quantity of the fragments; and that we might learn to honor the gifts of God, even the most insignificant, and if we do not ourselves need them, give them to the poor.

*Why did Christ, after this miracle, flee from the people?*

Because after this miracle the people recognized in him the Messiah, and would have made Him king. He wished to teach us to flee from praise and honor, and in all our actions seek not our own, but God's glory.

## CONSOLATION IN POVERTY.

**T**HIS gospel gives the account of Christ providing for those who followed and listened to Him, which is indeed consoling for the poor. God from the beginning of the world has always cared for His own. For the aid and comfort of His chosen people in time of famine God sent Joseph, the son of the Patriarch Jacob, in advance into Egypt: (*Gen. xlv. 5.*) for forty years He fed the children of Israel in the desert with bread from heaven; (*Deut. viii. 2. 3.*) He fed the Prophet Elias by a raven; (*iii Kings vii. 6.*) and thought of Daniel in the lions' den. (*Dan. xiv. 37.*) In the New Testament God shows His merciful care for His own, because in great need He fed them marvellously through angels, men, and even animals, as we frequently see in the lives of the saints. Truly has David said: God



forsakes not the just, I have been young, and am now old: and I have not seen the just forsaken, nor his seed seeking bread, (*Ps. xxxvi. 25.*) that is, one who sincerely serves Him, and seeks before all the kingdom of God and His justice, as Christ commands. (*Luke xii. 31.*) Strive to be a faithful child, and you will have God for your father, and with King David you can cast your care upon the Lord, and He will sustain you. You must not think it is enough to pray and trust in God, He demands that you should use your strength to receive help, for if any man will not work, neither let him eat. (*ii Thess. iii. 10.*)

ASPIRATION. In Thy omnipotence and goodness, O my God, I put my trust, firmly believing that if I fear Thee, serve Thee faithfully, and avoid evil, I shall not be abandoned in poverty, but receive many good things. Amen.

## INSTRUCTION ON PREPARATION FOR EASTER.

*Now the Pasch the festival day of the Jews, was near at hand.* (*John vi. 4.*)

**I**F we would sing a joyful Alleluia with the Church on the festival of Easter, we must fulfil her desire, and prepare ourselves to celebrate it worthily. Therefore, we should shun improper, clamorous meetings, and retire often to pray in solitude, especially to meditate on the bitter sufferings of our Saviour, for when man is alone, God speaks to his heart. (*Osee ii. 14.*) We should carefully examine our conscience, and consider how we stand before God, for upon this day shall be the expiation for you, and the cleansing from all your sins: you shall be cleansed before the Lord; for it is a Sabbath of rest, and you shall afflict your souls, that is, by fasting, watching, and praying. (*Lev. xvi. 30—31.*) From this Sunday until Easter we should fast more strictly, give more alms to the poor if we are able, or if poor ourselves, bear our poverty more patiently, offering it to Christ in union with His poverty, His hunger, thirst, &c.; we should make a sincere and contrite confession, and purify our heart from the old leaven of iniquity, that we may keep the Easter meal with Christ in the unleavened bread of purity and truth. (*i Cor. v. 7. 8.*) For this end we should incite ourselves to holy desires, rise from sin, which is the death of the soul.



## MONDAY IN THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (iii *Kings* iii. 16—28.) IN THOSE DAYS, Two women that were harlots, came to king Solomon, and stood before him, and one of them said: I beseech thee, my Lord, I and this woman dwelt in one house, and I was delivered of a child with her in the chamber. And the third day after that I was delivered, she also was delivered, and we were together, and no other person with us in the house, only we two. And this woman's child died in the night; for in her sleep she overlaid him. And rising in the dead time of the night, she took my child from my side, while I thy handmaid was asleep, and laid it in her bosom: and laid her dead child in my bosom. And when I rose in the morning to give my child suck, behold it was dead: but considering him more diligently when it was clear day, I found that it was not mine which I bore. And the other woman answered: It is not so as thou sayest, but thy child is dead, and mine is alive. On the contrary she said: Thou liest: for my child liveth, and thy child is dead. And in this manner they strove before the king. Then said the king: This one saith, My child is alive, and thy child is dead. And the other answereth: Nay, but thy child is dead, and mine liveth. The king therefore said: Bring me a sword. And when they had brought a sword before the king, Divide, said he, the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. But the woman, whose child was alive, said to the king (for her bowels were moved upon her child): I beseech thee my Lord, give her the child alive, and do not kill it. But the other said: Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. The king answered, and said: Give the living child to this woman, and let it not be killed: for she is the mother



thereof. And all Israel heard the judgment which the king had judged, and they feared the king, seeing that the wisdom of God was in him to judgment.

INSTRUCTION. In a sinful life one sin usually gives rise to another. Thus one of these wretched woman was not afraid to lie impudently, and to propose the death of her companion's child, forgetful that we can deceive man, but not God. Guard, O Christian, against the first step to sin, and consider that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, (*Prov. i. 7.*) the foundation of a pious, godly life.

GOSPEL. (*John ii. 13—25.*) AT THAT TIME, The Pasch of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem: and he found in the temple them that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting. And when he had made as it were a scourge of little cords, he drove them all out of the temple, the sheep also and the oxen, and the money of the changers he poured out, and the tables he overthrew. And to them that sold doves, he said: Take these things hence, and make not the house of my Father, a house of traffic. And his disciples remembered that it was written: The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up. The Jews therefore answered and said to him: What sign dost thou shew unto us, seeing thou dost these things. Jesus answered and said to them: Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. The Jews then said: Six and forty years was this temple in building, and wilt thou raise it up in three days? But he spoke of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen again from the dead, his disciples remembered, that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had said. Now when he was at Jerusalem at the Pasch, upon the festival day, many believed in his name, seeing his signs which he did. But Jesus did not trust himself unto them, for that he knew all men, and because he needed not that any should give testimony of man: for he knew what was in man.



**INSTRUCTION.** Like Jesus we also should be consumed by zeal for the house of God, that is, we should always endeavor to appear in church, before the face of God, with a heart purified from all worldly, revengeful, envious, proud, and sensual thoughts; giving ourselves to God with all reverence in devotion, assisting according to our circumstances to keep the house of God always neat, and the necessary decorations for the services properly provided. Whatever is done with good motives for the adornment of the church, is done for Christ Himself, who, day and night, dwells there in the most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

**TUESDAY IN THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT.**

**LESSON.** (*Exod. xxxii. 7—14.*) IN THOSE DAYS, The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Go, get thee down: thy people, which thou hast brought out of the land of Egypt, has sinned. They have quickly strayed from the way, which thou didst shew them: and they have made to themselves a molten calf, and have adored it, and sacrificing victims to it, have said: These are thy gods O Israel, that have brought thee out of the land of Egypt. And again the Lord said to Moses: I see that this people is stiff-necked: let me alone, that my wrath may be kindled against them, and that I may destroy them, and I will make of thee a great nation. But Moses besought the Lord his God saying: Why, O Lord, is thy indignation enkindled against thy people, whom thou hast brought out of the land of Egypt, with great power, and with a mighty hand? Let not the Egyptians say, I beseech thee: He craftily brought them out, that he might kill them in the mountains, and destroy them from the earth: let thy anger cease, and be appeased upon the wickedness of thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel thy servants, to whom thou sworest by thy own self, saying: I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven: and this whole land that I have spoken of, I will give to your seed, and you shall possess it for ever. And



the Lord was appeased from doing the evil which he had spoken against his people.

INSTRUCTION. This lesson caused St. Ambrose to marvel at the great meekness of Moses who, forgetting all the wrongs done to him by the people of Israel, declined God's offer to make him the leader of another great people, and so fervently prayed for the Israelites, that they loved him for his meekness, more than they wondered at his great deeds. Practice this virtue always, O Christian, to which Jesus Himself invites us, by saying: Learn from me, because I am meek, and, Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land, that is, they shall win the hearts of their fellow-men.

GOSPEL. (*John* vii. 14—31.) AT THAT TIME, About the midst of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. And the Jews wondered, saying: How doth this man know letters, having never learned? Jesus answered them and said: My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do the will of him, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh the glory of him that sent him, he is true and there is no injustice in him. Did not Moses give you the law: and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why seek you to kill me? The multitude answered, and said: Thou hast a devil: who seeketh to kill thee? Jesus answered and said to them: One work I have done, and you all wonder: therefore Moses gave you circumcision: (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers,) and on the Sabbath-day, you circumcise a man. If a man receive circumcision on the Sabbath-day, that the law of Moses may not be broken: are you angry at me because I have healed the whole man on the Sabbath-day? Judge not according to the appearance, but judge just judgment. Some therefore of Jerusalem said: Is not this he whom they seek to kill? And behold he speaketh



openly, and they say nothing to him. Have the rulers known for a truth that this is the Christ? But we know this man whence he is: but when the Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is. Jesus therefore cried out in the temple teaching and saying: You both know me, and you know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true whom you know not. I know him, because I am from him, and he hath sent me. They sought therefore to apprehend him: and no man laid hands on him because his hour was not yet come. But of the people many believed in him.

EXPLANATION. He who has always faithfully followed the teachings of our Lord, has experienced the truth of Christ's words, that His doctrine is from God, for it alone satisfies the desire of the soul for knowledge, peace, and happiness. The Saviour further proves the divinity of His doctrine by saying: "I seek not my own glory, but that of my Father." All the inventors of new doctrines and errors are usually impelled by the spirit of pride, seeking only their own glory, thus plainly showing that the Spirit of God works not with them. Had the Jews but taken these words of Christ to heart, they would not have judged Him so unjustly, nor reproached Him for healing the sick on the Sabbath, since they circumcised even on that day. But hatred, prejudice and envy blinded the Jews, so that they did not recognize the divine mission of Christ, and sought to kill Him. O how happy is the man who believes in Jesus, and lives according to His doctrine; he will enjoy sweet peace in this life, and nameless glory in eternity!

#### WEDNESDAY IN THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Isai. i. 16—19.*) Thus saith the Lord God: Wash yourselves, be clean, take away the evil of your devices from my eyes: cease to do perversely, learn to do well: seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge for the fatherless, defend the widow. And then come, and accuse me, saith the Lord: if your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow: and if they be red as crimson, they shall be white as



wool. If you be willing, and will hearken to me, you shall eat the good things of the land.

EXPLANATION. In this lesson God, shows plainly that He forgives and forgets all the sins of the man who firmly resolves to depart from his perverse ways, to purify his heart, and turn penitently to God. Grace and forgiveness follow only the sincere amendment of heart. Those who think that all is accomplished when the formula of contrition is thoughtlessly recited, and a careless accusation of the sins in confession is made, should remember that grace and forgiveness will not be obtained. The Jews fancied themselves purified by frequently washing their hands.

GOSPEL. (*John ix. 1—38.*) AT THAT TIME, Jesus passing by, saw a man who was blind from his birth: and his disciples asked him: Rabbi, who hath sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind? Jesus answered: Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me, whilst it is day: the night cometh when no man can work; as long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When he had said these things, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and spread the clay upon his eyes, and said to him: Go, wash in the pool of Siloe, (which is interpreted, Sent.) He went therefore, and washed, and he came seeing. The neighbors therefore, and they who had seen him before that he was a beggar, said: Is not this he that sat, and begged? Some said: This is he. But others said: No, but he is like him. But he said: I am he. They said therefore to him: How were thy eyes opened? He answered: That man that is called Jesus, made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me: Go to the pool of Siloe, and wash. And I went, I washed, and I see. And they said to him: Where is he? He saith: I know not. They bring him that had been blind, to the Pharisees. Now it was the Sabbath when Jesus made the clay, and opened his





eyes. Again therefore the Pharisees asked him how he had received his sight. But he said to them: He put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and I see. Some therefore of the Pharisees said: This man is not of God, who keepeth not the Sabbath. But others said: How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them. They say therefore to the blind man again: What sayest thou of him that hath opened thy eyes? And he said: He is a prophet. The Jews then did not believe concern-



ing him, that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight: and asked them, saying: Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then doth he now see? His parents answered them, and said: We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: but how he now seeth, we know not: or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: ask himself: he is of age, let him speak for himself. These things his parents said, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had already agreed among themselves, that if any man should confess him to be Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore did his parents say: He is of age, ask him. They therefore called the man again that had been blind, and said to him: Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner. He said therefore to them: If he be a sinner, I know not: one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. They said then to him: What did he to thee? How did he open thy eyes? He answered them: I have told you already, and you have heard: why would you hear it again? will you also become his disciples? They reviled him therefore, and said: Be thou his disciple: but we are the disciples of Moses. We know that God spoke to Moses: but as to this man, we know not from whence he is. The man answered, and said to them: Why herein is a wonderful thing that you know not from whence he is, and he hath opened my eyes: now we know that God doth not hear sinners: but if a man be a server of God, and doth his will, him he heareth. From the beginning of the world it hath not been heard, that any man hath opened the eyes of one born blind. Unless this man were of God, he could not do any thing. They answered, and said to him: Thou wast wholly born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out. Jesus



heard that they had cast him out: and when he had found him, he said to him: Dost thou believe in the Son of God? He answered, and said: Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him? And Jesus said to him: Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said: I believe, Lord. And falling down he adored him.

EXPLANATION. It was the universal opinion of the Jews that bodily disease was the consequence of the sins either of the sufferer or of his parents; although this is often, yet it is not always the case. In restoring sight to the man born blind Christ manifested His divine power and mission. The day on which Christ was to do the work of His Father, was the day of His life on earth; in the night, that is, after death, no one can do anything meritorious for the honor of God, or for the salvation of his own soul. The healing of the blind man showed Jesus to be the light of the world, which dispels physical and spiritual darkness; for with light to his eyes the poor beggar received at the same time the light of faith in Christ. The eyes of the Pharisees were not opened, pride kept them closed. In their eyes Jesus was a sinner, and because they could in no other way deny the miracle, they made the uncharitable and false declaration, that God hears not the prayers of a sinner, whereas we know God never rejects the prayer of true repentance. — Learn from this, O Christian, to scorn the terrible malice of sin, and to emulate the poor blind man, who received so readily the light of faith, and from the profession of which he could be deterred by no persecution on the part of Christ's enemies.

#### THURSDAY IN THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (iv *Kings* iv. 25—38.) IN THOSE DAYS, A Sunamitess came to Eliseus on mount Carmel: and when the man of God saw her coming towards, he said to Giezi his servant: Behold that Sunamitess. Go therefore to meet her, and say to her: Is all well with thee, and with thy husband, and with thy son? And she answered: Well. And when she came to the man of God to the mount, she caught hold on his feet: and Giezi came to remove her. And the man of God said: Let her alone, for



her soul is in anguish, and the Lord hath hid it from me; and hath not told me. And she said to him: Did I ask a son of my Lord? Did I not say to thee: Do not deceive me? Then he said to Giezi: Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thy hand, and go. If any man meet thee, salute him not: and if any man salute thee, answer him not: and lay my staff upon the face of the child. But the mother of the child said: As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. He arose therefore, and followed her. But Giezi was gone before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child, and there was no voice nor sense: and he returned to meet him, and told him, saying: The child is not risen. Eliseus therefore went into the house, and behold the child lay dead on his bed: and going in he shut the door upon him, and upon the child: and he prayed to the Lord. And he went up, and lay upon the child: and he put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he bowed himself upon him, and the child's flesh grew warm. Then he returned and walked in the house, once to and fro: and he went up, and lay upon him: and the child gaped seven times, and opened his eyes. And he called Giezi, and said to him: Call this Sunamitess. And she being called went in to him. And he said: Take up thy son. She came and fell at his feet, and worshipped upon the ground: and took up her son, and went out. And Eliseus returned to Galgal.

EXPLANATION. St. Augustine says the resurrection of the widow's son from the dead by the Prophet Eliseus was a type of the Redemption of mankind from sin and death by Jesus Christ. "Eliseus," he writes, "came, and went up to the chamber, Christ came, and ascended the cross; Eliseus bowed down to raise the boy, Christ humbled Himself to raise the world lying in sin; Eliseus laid his eyes and mouth on the eyes and mouth of the



boy; behold, beloved brethren, how that man of a ripe age conformed himself to the size of the boy lying there! That which Eliseus prototyped in this boy, Christ fulfilled for the whole of mankind; as the apostle says: "He humbled Himself, and became obedient even unto death." — Oh! let us be grateful to Jesus who has raised us from sin to eternal life, and made us children of God!

GOSPEL. (*Luke* vii. 11—16.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus went into a city called Naim: and there went with him his disciples and a great multitude. And when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold a dead man was carried out, the only son of his mother: and she was a widow: and a great multitude of the city was with her. Whom when the Lord had seen, being moved with mercy towards her, he said to her: Weep not. And he came near and touched the bier. (And they that carried it, stood still.) And he said: Young man, I say to thee, arise. And he that was dead, sat up, and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother. And there came a fear on them all: and they glorified God, saying: A great prophet is risen up among us: and, God hath visited his people.

INSTRUCTION. By the mother of the dead youth St. Augustine and St. Ambrose understand in a spiritual sense, the Church mourning for her children, who by grievous sin have lost the life of the soul, that is, the grace of God, and entreating the Lord by prayers and tears, to come again and give grace and life to them. And Jesus comes, touches the sinner with His cross, that is, by external and internal sufferings exhorts him to penance, assists him to subdue his evil passions, takes away his sin, gives him grace once more, and the sinner lives again, so that all who see his conversion praise and glorify God. Thank God that you are a child of His holy Church, by whose intercession Christ even now raises those, who are spiritually dead, to life.

#### FRIDAY IN THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (iii *Kings* xvii. 17—24.) IN THOSE DAYS, The son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick, and the sickness was very grievous, so that



there was no breath left in him. And she said to Elias: What have I to do with thee thou man of God? Art thou come to me that my iniquities should be remembered, and that thou shouldst kill my son? And Elias said to her: Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him into the upper chamber where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. And he cried to the Lord, and said: O Lord my God, hast thou afflicted also the widow, with whom I am after a sort maintained, so as to kill her son? And he stretched, and measured himself upon the child three times, and cried to the Lord, and said: O Lord my God, let the soul of this child, I beseech thee, return into his body. And the Lord heard the voice of Elias: and the soul of the child returned into him, and he revived. And Elias took the child, and brought him down from the upper chamber to the house below, and delivered him to his mother, and said to her: Behold thy son liveth. And the woman said to Elias: Now, by this I know that thou art a man of God, and the word of the Lord in thy mouth is true.

INSTRUCTION. To the humility and the spirit of penance with which this widow accused herself as the cause of her child's death, St. Theodoret ascribes the grace of his restoration to life by the Prophet Elias. Remember that God despises not an humble and contrite heart, bear the afflictions with which He visits you, in humble patience and in the spirit of penance, until it pleases Him to take them from you.

GOSPEL. (*John xi. 1—45.*) AT THAT TIME, There was a certain man sick named Lazarus, of Bethania, of the town of Mary and of Martha her sister. (And Mary was she that anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair: whose brother Lazarus was sick.) His sisters therefore sent to him saying: Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest, is sick. And Jesus hearing it, said to them: This sickness is



not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister Mary, and Lazarus. When he had heard therefore that he was sick he still remained in the same place two days; then after that he said to his disciples: Let us go into Judea again. The disciples say to him: Rabbi, the Jews but now sought to stone thee, and goest thou thither again? Jesus answered: Are there not twelve hours of the day? If a man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world: but if he walk in the night, he stumbleth, because the light is not in him. These things he said, and after that he said to them: Lazarus our friend sleepeth: but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. His disciples therefore said: Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. But Jesus spoke of his death and they thought that he spoke of the repose of sleep. Then therefore Jesus said to them plainly: Lazarus is dead: and I am glad for your sakes, that I was not there, that you may believe; but let us go to him. Thomas therefore, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow-disciples: Let us also go, that we may die with him. Jesus therefore came, and found that he had been four days already in the grave. (Now Bethania was near Jerusalem about fifteen furlongs off.) And many of the Jews were come to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Martha therefore, as soon as she heard that Jesus was come, went to meet him: but Mary sat at home. Martha therefore said to Jesus: Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died: but now also I know that whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith to her: Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith to him: I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said to her: I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me although he be dead



shall live: and every one that liveth, and believeth in me, shall not die for ever. Believest thou this? She saith to him: Yea Lord, I have believed that thou art Christ the Son of the living God, who art come into this world. And when she had said these things, she went, and called her sister Mary secretly, saying: The Master is come and calleth for the. She, as soon as she heard this, riseth quickly and cometh to him: for Jesus was not yet come into the town: but he was still in that place where Martha had met him. The Jews therefore, who were with her in the house and comforted her, when they saw Mary that she rose up speedily and went out, followed her, saying: She goeth to the grave, to weep there. When Mary therefore was come where Jesus was, seeing him, she fell down at his feet, and saith to him: Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. Jesus therefore, when he saw her weeping, and the Jews that were come with her, weeping, groaned in the spirit, and troubled himself, and said: Where have you laid him? They say to him: Lord, come and see. And Jesus wept. The Jews therefore said: Behold how he loved him. But some of them said: Could not he, that opened the eyes of the man born blind have caused that this man should not die? Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the sepulchre; now it was a cave: and a stone was laid over it. Jesus saith: Take away the stone. Martha the sister of him that was dead, saith to him: Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he is now of four days. Jesus saith to her: Did not I say to thee, that if thou believe, thou shalt see the glory of God? They took therefore the stone away: and Jesus lifting up his eyes said: Father, I give thee thanks that thou hast heard me; and I knew that thou hearest me always, but because of the people who stand about, have I said it:



that they may believe that thou hast sent me. When he had said these things, he cried with a loud voice: Lazarus, come forth. And presently he that had been dead came forth, bound feet and hands with winding-bands, and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said to them: Loose him and let him go. Many therefore of the Jews who were come to Mary and Martha, and had seen the things that Jesus did, believed in him.

INSTRUCTION. By the marvellous raising of Lazarus, Christ shows His divinity, and strengthens our belief in a future resurrection of the body, as St. Ambrose writes: "Why did Jesus go to the grave and cry out with a loud voice: Lazarus, come forth, if He did not wish to give testimony of the future resurrection?" The holy Fathers also regard the raising of Lazarus as a type of the resurrection of the sinner from the sleep of sin, which takes place when he confesses his sins with contrition, and is loosed by the priests from their bonds. Beseech the Lord that with a loud voice He may cry to you, and all sinners: "Come forth, awake from the sleep of sin, confess your sins, and live forever!"

#### SATURDAY IN THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Isai.* xlix. 8—15.) THUS saith the Lord: In an acceptable time I have heard thee, and in the day of salvation I have helped thee: and I have preserved thee, and given thee to be a covenant of the people, that thou mightst raise up the earth, and possess the inheritances that were destroyed: that thou mightst say to them that are bound: Come forth: and to them that are in darkness: Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in every plain. They shall not hunger, nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor the sun strike them: for he that is merciful to them, shall be their shepherd, and at the fountains of waters he shall give them drink. And I will make all my mountains a way, and my paths shall be exalted. Behold these shall come from afar, and



behold these from the north and from the sea, and these from the south country. Give praise, O ye heavens, and rejoice, O earth, ye mountains give praise with jubilation: because the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy on his poor ones. And Sion said: The Lord hath forsaken me, and the Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? And if she should forget, yet will not I forget thee, saith the Lord Almighty.

EXPLANATION. These prophecies concerning Christ and His Church direct our attention to the happy condition which Jesus obtained for the whole world by His passion and death, and by the foundation of His Church. All who enter therein, are led by Christ; their hunger and thirst are appeased by the Sacraments; and the practice of virtues which heretofore was like ascending steep mountains, is made easy through Jesus. O what happiness is ours, to be members of this holy Church in which Jesus acts so mercifully towards us, and bestows so many graces upon us!

GOSPEL. (*John* viii. 12—20.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke to the multitude of the Jews, saying: I am the light of the world: he that followeth me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life. The Pharisees therefore said to him: Thou givest testimony of thyself: thy testimony is not true. Jesus answered, and said to them: Although I give testimony of myself, my testimony is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go, but you know not whence I come, or whither I go. You judge according to the flesh: I judge not any man: and if I do judge, my judgment is true: because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. And in your law it is written, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that give testimony of myself: and the Father that sent me, giveth testimony of me, they said therefore to him: Where is thy father? Jesus answered: Neither me do you know, nor my Father: if you did know me, you would



know my Father also. These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, teaching in the temple: and no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

**EXPLANATION.** Christ calls Himself the light of the world, because by His teachings and example, He brings man to the knowledge of truth, virtue, and eternal happiness, if he will only listen to His voice, and is willing to follow His example. The Pharisees desired a proof of this, but Jesus pointed out to them the testimony of His Father, that is, the great miracles which He wrought in His Father's name. When Christ says: I judge no man, He means He judges not the Pharisees according to the flesh, that is, falsely and wrongly, or, as St. Chrysostom says: He judged no man now because He had come into the world to redeem and save; the time of judgment was not now, but will be at the end of the world.

**PETITION.** O Jesus, Light of the world! Grant, that I may follow and acknowledge Thee always as the true Son of God, and one day receive a merciful judgment from Thee.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT. (JUDICA.)



**T**HIS Sunday, called Judica from the first word of the Introit, is also called Passion Sunday, because from this day the Church occupies herself exclusively with the contemplation of the passion and death of Christ. The pictures of Christ crucified are covered to-day in memory of His having hidden Himself from the Jews until His entrance into Jerusalem, no longer showing Himself in public. (*John xi. 54.*) In the Mass the Glory be to the Father, &c. is omitted, because in the person of Christ the Holy Trinity was dishonored. The psalm Judica is not said to-day, because on this day the high priests held council about our Lord, for which reason the Church in the name of the suffering Saviour uses these words at the Introit: **Judge me, O God, and distinguish my cause from the nation that is not holy: deliver me from the unjust and deceitful man, for Thou art my God and my strength.**



Send forth thy light and thy truth: they have conducted me, and brought me unto thy holy hill, and into thy tabernacles. (*Ps. xlii. 1. 3.*)

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** We beseech Thee, Almighty God, graciously to look upon Thy family; that by Thy bounty it may be governed in body, and by Thy protection be guarded in mind. Through, &c.

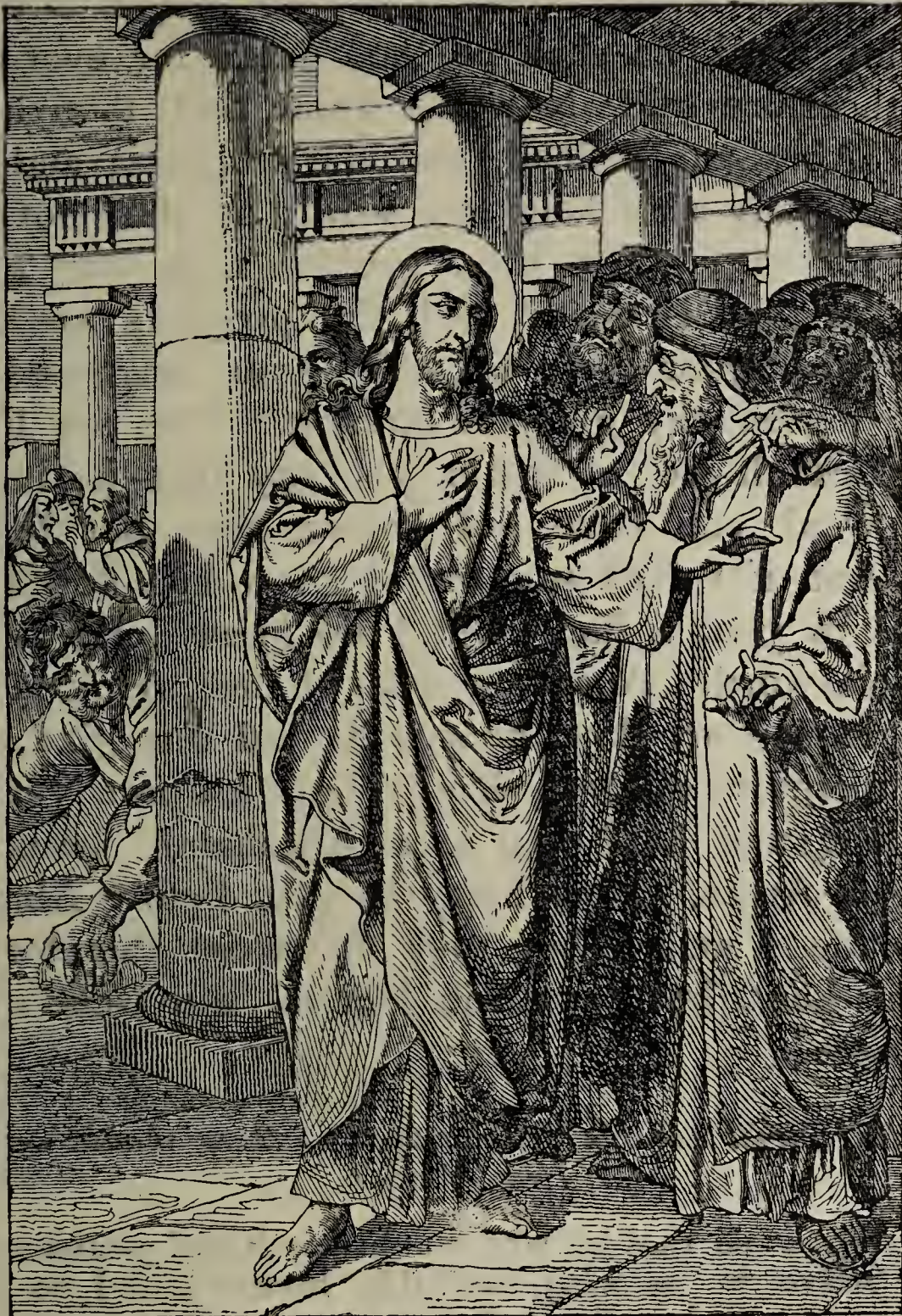
**EPISTLE.** (*Heb. ix. 11—15.*) **BRETHREN,** Christ being come, a high-priest of the good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is, not of this creation, neither by the blood of goats or of calves, but by his own blood, entered once into the Holies, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and of oxen, and the ashes of an heifer being sprinkled, sanctify such as are defiled, to the cleansing of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who, by the Holy Ghost, offered himself without spot to God, cleanse our conscience from dead works, to serve the living God? And therefore he is the Mediator of the new testament; that by means of his death, for the redemption of those transgressions which were under the former testament; they that are called may receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

**EXPLANATION.** St. Paul here teaches, that Christ as the true high-priest of the New Testament, through His precious blood on the altar of the cross, has indeed rendered perfect satisfaction for sins, but that the sinner must also do his own part, by coöperating with Christ to make himself less unworthy of participating in His passion and merits, and to appropriate to himself its fruits. This is done when he diligently and devoutly assists at the unbloody Sacrifice of the Mass, by which the fruits of the death on the cross are attributed to us; when, according to the will of the Church, he purifies his conscience by true contrition and confession; and when he seeks by trust in Christ's merits to render some satisfaction for his sins through voluntary penance and faithful following of Christ.

**ASPIRATION.** Grant us, O meek Jesus, Thy grace, that through perfect sorrow for our sins and the ex-



ercise of good works we may become participators in the merits of Thy bitter passion.



GOSPEL. (*John* viii. 46—59.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to the multitudes of the Jews: Which of you shall convince me of sin? If I say the truth to you, why do you not believe me? He that is of God, heareth the words of God. Therefore you hear them not, because you are not of God. The Jews therefore answered, and said to him: Do not we say well, that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? Jesus answered: I have not a devil; but I



honor my Father, and you have dishonored me. But I seek not my own glory; there is one that seeketh and judgeth. Amen, amen, I say to you, if any man keep my word, he shall not see death for ever. The Jews therefore said: Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest: If any man keep my word, he shall not taste death for ever. Art thou greater than our Father Abraham, who is dead? and the prophets are dead. Whom dost thou make thyself? Jesus answered: If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father that glorifieth me, of whom you say that he is your God. And you have not known him; but I know him. And if I shall say that I know him not, I shall be like to you, a liar. But I do know him, and do keep his word. Abraham your father rejoiced that he might see my day: he saw it, and was glad. The Jews therefore said to him: Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said to them: Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham was made, I am. They took up stones therefore to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple.

*Why did Christ ask the Jews, which of them should convince Him of sin?*

To show us that he who would teach and punish others, should strive to be irreproachable himself; and to prove that He, being free from sin, was more than mere man, and therefore, the Messiah, the Son of God, as He repeatedly told the Jews, especially in this day's gospel, and substantiated by His great and numerous miracles.

*Why did He say: He that is of God, heareth the words of God?*

To prove that the Jews on account of their stubbornness and unbelief were not the children of God, but of the devil. "Therefore," St. Gregory says, "let every one when he hears the word of God, ask himself, of whom he is. Eter-



nal truth demands that we be desirous of the heavenly fatherland, that we tame the desires of the flesh, be indifferent to the praises of the world, covet not our neighbor's goods, and give alms according to our means. Therefore examine yourself, and if you find in your heart this voice of God, then you will know that you are of God."

### CONSOLATION UNDER CALUMNY.

**W**HEN Christ told the Jews the truth, He received insults and calumny; they called Him a Samaritan, that is, an unbeliever, a heretic, one possessed of a devil. This was a terrible slander, and it must have pained Him exceedingly, but at the same time it is a great consolation to those who are innocently calumniated, when they consider that Christ Himself received nothing better. St. Augustine consoles such by saying: "O friend, what is there that can happen to you that your Saviour did not suffer before you? Is it slander? He heard it, when He was called a glutton, a drunkard, a heretic, and a rebel, a companion of sinners, one possessed of a devil; He even heard, when casting out devils, that He did so by Beelzebub, prince of devils." (*Matt. ix. 34.*) He therefore comforts His apostles, saying, If they have called the good man of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household? (*Matt. x. 25.*) Are the pains bitter? There is no pain so bitter that He has not endured it; for what is more painful, and at the same time more ignominious, than the death of the cross? For think, says St. Paul, diligently upon him who endured such opposition from sinners against himself: that you be not wearied (by all contempt and calumny), fainting in your minds. (*Heb. xii. 3.*)

*How and why did Christ defend Himself against those who slandered Him?*

Only by denying with the greatest modesty the things with which they reproached Him, saying that He had not a devil, that He was not a Samaritan, because He honored His Father not in their manner, but in His own. In repelling this calumny while He left the rest unanswered, Christ removed all doubt in regard to His divine mission, thus vindicating the honor of God, and securing the salvation of man. Christ thus teaches us by His own conduct to defend ourselves only against those detractions and insults which endanger the honor of God and the salvation of man,



and then to defend ourselves with all modesty; by no means however to do it, if they injure only our own good name, for we should leave the restoration of that to God, as exemplified by Christ, who knows better than we how to preserve and restore it.

*[See the Instruction on the Epistle of the third Sunday after Epiphany.]*

*How had Abraham seen Christ's day?*

In spirit, that is, by divine revelation he foresaw the coming of Christ and rejoiced; also, he heard, by revelation from God, with the other just in Limbo, that Christ's coming had taken place, and derived the greatest comfort from it.

*Why did Christ conceal Himself from the Jews, instead of taking vengeance?*

Because the time of His death had not come; because He would show His meekness and patience and teach us that we should avoid our enemies rather than resist them or take vengeance on them; Christ wished to instruct us to avoid passionate and quarrelsome people, for it is an honor for a man, to separate from quarrels: but all fools are meddling with reproaches. (*Prov. xx. 3.*)

PETITION. When Thine enemies calumniated Thee, most meek Jesus, Thou didst answer them with tender words, and when they were about to stone Thee, Thou didst depart from them, whilst we can scarcely bear a hard word, and far from yielding to our neighbor, defend and avenge ourselves most passionately. Ah! pardon us our impatience, and grant us the grace to bear patiently the wrongs done us, and when necessary, answer with gentleness for Thy glory and the salvation of our neighbor.

MONDAY IN THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Jonas* iii. 1—10.) IN THOSE DAYS, The word of the Lord came to Jonas the second time, saying: Arise, and go to Ninive the great city: and preach in it the preaching that I bid thee. And Jonas arose, and went to Ninive according to the word of



the Lord: now Ninive was a great city of three days' journey. And Jonas began to enter into the city one day's journey: and he cried, and said: Yet forty days, and Ninive shall be destroyed. And the men of Ninive believed in God: and they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least. And the word came to the King of Ninive: and he rose up out of his throne, and cast away his robe from him, and was clothed in sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published in Ninive from the mouth of the king and of his princes, saying: Let neither men nor beasts, oxen, nor sheep, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water. And let men and beasts be covered with sackcloth, and cry to the Lord with all their strength, and let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the iniquity that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn, and forgive: and will turn away from his fierce anger, and we shall not perish? And God saw their works, that they were turned from their evil way: and the Lord our God had mercy on the people.

INSTRUCTION. In this lesson is plainly shown the great effect produced by true penance; it took away many and grievous vices from a great city, appeased the wrath of God, turned aside His scourge, yes, even obtained grace and reconciliation, so that the Ninivites from slaves of the devil were made friends of God; from an unjust, godless, infidel, vicious people they were changed to a just, pious, faithful, holy nation. "If," says St. Bernard, "we turn to penance, we make the angels rejoice. Hasten, therefore, brethren, hasten; not the angels only, but even the Creator of the angels awaits you." Hasten to penance, that the Ninivites may not some day bear witness against you. (*Matt.* xii. 41.)

GOSPEL. (*John* vii. 32—39.) AT THAT TIME, The rulers and Pharisees sent ministers to apprehend Jesus. Jesus therefore said to them: Yet a little while I am with you: and then I go to him that sent me. You



shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither you cannot come. The Jews therefore said among themselves: Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles? What is this saying that he hath said: You shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, you cannot come? And on the last and great day of the festivity, Jesus stood and cried, saying: If any man thirst, let him come to me, and drink. He that believeth in me, as the scripture saith, Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. Now this he said of the Spirit which they should receive who believed in him.

EXPLANATION. In this gospel Jesus tells the Jews that He will soon return to the Father, meaning that He would die, rise from death, and ascend into heaven; then will they seek, but not find Him, because they did not recognize Him as the true Messiah, and they could not go whither He was going, into heaven, because they remained in their sins. Oh how terrible is the blindness of man, who knows not the time of grace and visitation, who despises the hand God stretches out towards him, and gives no heed to the call to penance! Hear what God Himself says: Because I called, and you refused: I stretched out my hand, and there was none that regarded. I also will laugh in your destruction, when sudden calamity shall fall on you, when tribulation and distress (of death and judgment) shall come upon you: then shall they call upon me, and I will not hear: they shall rise in the morning (to seek me), and shall not find me. (*Prov. i. 24—28.*)

#### TUESDAY IN THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Dan. xiv. 28—42.*) IN THOSE DAYS, The people of Babylon came to the king and said to him: Deliver us Daniel, who hath destroyed Bel and killed the Dragon, otherwise we will destroy thee and thy house. And the king saw that they pressed upon him violently: and being constrained by necessity he delivered Daniel to them. And they cast him into the



den of lions, and he was there six days. And in the den there were seven lions, and they had given to them two carcasses every day, and two sheep: but then they were not given unto them, that they might devour Daniel. Now there was in Judea a prophet called Habacuc, and he had boiled pottage and had broken bread in a bowl: and was going into the field, to carry it to the reapers. And the angel of the Lord said to Habacuc: Carry the dinner which thou hast into Babylon to Daniel, who is in the lions' den. And Habacuc said: Lord, I never saw Babylon, nor do I know the den. And the angel of the Lord took him by the top of his head, and carried him by the hair of his head, and set him in Babylon over the den in the force of his spirit. And Habacuc cried, saying: O Daniel, thou servant of God, take the dinner that God hath sent thee. And Daniel said: Thou hast remembered me, O God, and thou hast not forsaken them that love thee. And Daniel arose and ate. And the angel of the Lord presently set Habacuc again in his own place. And upon the seventh day the king came to bewail Daniel: and he came to the den, and looked in, and behold Daniel was sitting in the midst of the lions. And the king cried out with a loud voice, saying: Great art thou, O Lord the God of Daniel. And he drew him out of the lions' den. But those that had been the cause of his destruction, he cast into the den, and they were devoured in a moment before him. Then the King said: Let all the inhabitants of the whole earth fear the God of Daniel: for he is the Saviour, working signs, and wonders in the earth: who hath delivered Daniel out of the lions' den.

EXPLANATION. The Babylonians worshipped the detestable idol Bel, whose priests deceived the people. Daniel unmasked the deceits of the priests, destroyed the idol and its temple, at which the Babylonians became furious, and forced the king, who was well disposed towards Daniel,



but who had the heart of a coward, to cause him to be thrown into the lions' den. God did not desert His faithful servant, but preserved him unharmed in the midst of the lions, and fed him in a miraculous manner. Fulfil your duties faithfully, beloved Christians, always promote the honor of God, and destroy the works of Satan. Fear nothing, God never deserts His own.

GOSPEL. (*John* vii. 1—13.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus walked in Galilee, for he would not walk in Judea: because the Jews sought to kill him. Now the Jewish feast of Tabernacles was at hand. And his brethren said to him: Pass from hence, and go into Judea: that thy disciples also may see thy works which thou dost. For there is no man that doth anything in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly: if thou do these things, manifest thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him. Then Jesus said to them: My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you: but me it hateth: because I give testimony of it, that the works thereof are evil. Go you up to this festival day, but I go not up to this festival day: because my time is not accomplished. When he had said these things, he himself stayed in Galilee. But after his brethren were gone up, then he also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. The Jews therefore sought him on the festival day, and said: Where is he? And there was much murmuring among the multitude concerning him. For some said: He is a good man. And others said: No, but he seduceth the people. Yet no man spoke openly of him for fear of the Jews.

EXPLANATION. Even the brethren, that is, the relatives of Christ did not believe in Him, and desired, therefore, that He should go to Jerusalem and perform miracles, that the high council might give judgment, whether He was the true Messiah. But Jesus answered them: My time, (to die and by my death and resurrection to convince the whole world of my mission), is not yet come; but your time is always ready, that is, you take part with my



enemies because you are children of the world, they love the world and hate me, because I reprove and punish its sinful works; but you they hate not, you have nothing to fear from them, because you also love the world. The truth of Christ's words is verified even to-day. He who takes sides with the reckless children of the world has nothing to fear from them, but he who avoids their society is persecuted and slandered. Blessed shall you be, says Jesus, when men shall hate you, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Be glad in that day and rejoice: for behold, your reward is great in heaven. (*Luke* vi. 22. 23.)

**WEDNESDAY IN THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT.**

LESSON. (*Lev.* xix. 1., 2., 10—19.) IN THOSE DAYS, The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to all the assembly of the children of Israel, and thou shalt say to them: I am the Lord your God. You shall not steal. You shall not lie, neither shall any man deceive his neighbor. Thou shalt not swear falsely by my name, nor profane the name of thy God; I am the Lord. Thou shalt not calumniate thy neighbor, nor oppress him by violence. The wages of him that has been hired by thee shall not abide with thee until the morning. Thou shalt not speak evil of the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind: but thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, because I am the Lord. Thou shalt not do that which is unjust, nor judge unjustly. Respect not the person of the poor, nor honor the countenance of the mighty. But judge thy neighbor according to justice. Thou shalt not be a detractor nor a whisperer among the people. Thou shalt not stand against the blood of thy neighbor; I am the Lord. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, but reprove him openly, lest thou incur sin through him. Seek not revenge, nor be mindful of the injury of thy citizens. Thou shalt love thy friend as thyself. I am the Lord. Keep ye my laws, for I am the Lord your God.



EXPLANATION. There have been and are people who assert, that the commandments of God cannot be observed. To this the council of Trent answers: "God commands nothing that is impossible, but He encourages us to do what we can, and to ask His assistance for that which is difficult, and He will aid us in fulfilling the same." (*Sess. vi. c. xi.*) His commandments are not difficult; His yoke is sweet and His burden light.

PRAYER. O Jesus! whose will it is, that I shall take up Thy yoke, if I wish peace for my soul, grant me the grace to bear it joyously after Thee till death. Amen.

GOSPEL. (*John x. 22—38.*) AT THAT TIME, It was the feast of the Dedication at Jerusalem: and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. The Jews therefore came round about him, and said to him: How long dost thou hold our souls in suspense? if thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them: I speak to you, and you believe not the works that I do in the name of my Father, they give testimony of me: but you do not believe, because you are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice: and I know them, and they follow me: and I give them life everlasting; and they shall not perish for ever, and no man shall pluck them out of my hand. That which my Father hath given me, is greater than all: and no man can snatch them out of the hand of my Father. I and the Father are one. The Jews then took up stones, to stone him. Jesus answered them: Many good works I have shewed you from my Father, for which of those works do you stone me? The Jews answered him: For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy: and because that thou being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them: Is it not written in your law: I said, you are gods? If he called them gods, to whom the word of God was spoken, and the Scripture cannot be



broken: do you say of him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world: Thou blasphemest: because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do: though you will not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.

EXPLANATION. By subterfuge, in order that they might catch Jesus in His speech, the Jews repeatedly asked if He were the Christ. Jesus points to His works and tells them that they should therefore believe in Him, but they could not believe in Him, because they did not wish to belong to His flock and to accept His doctrine, which to them seemed too hard. There are many Christians who have indeed the name, and are counted among Christ's sheep, who are not such because they follow not His doctrine. Those only are His sheep who hear His voice, and faithfully follow Him, to these He gives eternal life, and they will not perish; neither the world, the flesh, nor the devil can take them from His hand. Listen, therefore, to the voice of Jesus, follow Him as a faithful lamb, and He will never abandon you, either in time or eternity.

#### THURSDAY IN THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Dan.* iii. 34—45.) IN THOSE DAYS, Azarias prayed to the Lord, saying: Deliver us not up for ever, we beseech thee, for thy name's sake, and abolish not thy covenant; and take not away thy mercy from us for the sake of Abraham thy beloved, and Isaac thy servant, and Israel thy holy one: to whom thou hast spoken, promising that thou wouldst multiply their seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand that is on the sea shore: for we, O Lord, are diminished more than any nation, and are brought low in all the earth this day for our sins. Neither is there at this time prince, or leader, or prophet, or holocaust, or sacrifice, or oblation, or incense, or place of first-fruits before thee, that we may find thy mercy: nevertheless in a contrite heart and humble spirit let us be accepted. As in holocausts of rams, and bullocks,



and as in thousands of fat lambs: so let our sacrifice be made in thy sight this day, that it may please thee: for there is no confusion to them that trust in thee. And now we follow thee with all our heart, and we fear thee, and seek thy face. Put us not to confusion: but deal with us according to thy meekness, and according to the multitude of thy mercy. And deliver us according to thy wonderful works, and give glory to thy name, O Lord: and let all them be confounded that shew evils to thy servants, let them be confounded in all thy might, and let their strength be broken: and let them know that thou art the Lord, the only God, and glorious over all the world O Lord our God.

EXPLANATION. King Nebuchodonosor had caused a statue to be erected, and commanded all his subjects, as well as the Jews who were his captives, to adore it. Three Jewish youths refused, and by order of the king were cast into a fiery furnace. But wonderfully preserved by God they walked in the midst of the flames unhurt, praising the Lord. One of them, by name Azarias, prayed God to have mercy on His people and deliver them from the hands of the enemy. Let us imitate these three youths, and never bend the knee before the idol of the hour, the lust of the world, and of vanity, let us sacrifice all for the faith, even the last drop of our blood.

*[See the gospel and its explanation on the feast of St. Mary Magdalen in the second part of this book.]*

#### FRIDAY IN THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Jer.* xvii. 13—18.) IN THOSE DAYS, Jeremias said: O Lord, the hope of Israel: all that forsake thee shall be confounded: they that depart from thee, shall be written in the earth: because they have forsaken the Lord the vein of living waters: Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed: save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise. Behold they say to me: Where is the word of the Lord? let it come. And I am not troubled, following thee for my pastor: and I have not desired the day of man, thou



knowest it. That which went out of my lips, hath been right in thy sight. Be not thou a terror unto me, thou art my hope in the day of affliction. Let them be confounded that persecute me, and let not me be confounded: let them be afraid, and let not me be afraid: bring upon them the day of affliction, and with a double destruction, destroy them, O Lord our God.

EXPLANATION. The Prophet Jeremias was insulted and persecuted by the Jews, because he fearlessly announced the truth to them; he laments his troubles before God, and is comforted, because the aim of his endeavors was the glory of God, and that if he had effected any good, the honor belonged to God. "Be careful," writes St. Jerome, "to avoid being carried away by the desire of vain glory. Behold what an evil it is, because he who seeks such glory cannot believe! Let us always say, Thou, O Lord, art my glory!" (*Epist. ad Eustoch. 22.*)

GOSPEL. (*John xi. 47—54.*) AT THAT TIME, The chief priests and Pharisees assembled in council against Jesus, and said: What do we, for this man doth many miracles? If we let him alone so, all will believe in him: and the Romans will come, and take away our place and nation. But one of them named Caiphas, being the high-priest that year, said to them: You know nothing, neither do you consider that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this he spoke not of himself: but being the high-priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation, and not only for the nation, but to gather in one the children of God, that were dispersed. From that day therefore they devised to put him to death. Wherefore Jesus walked no more openly among the Jews, but he went unto a country near the desert, unto a city that is called Ephrem, and there he abode with his disciples.

EXPLANATION. With each day the hatred of the Jews increased and the more wonderful were the deeds



our Saviour performed the more determined were they to put Him to death. They held a council, therefore, at which the high-priest Caiphas prophesied the death of Jesus for the salvation of the whole world, in these remarkable words: "It is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." Caiphas was a wicked man, yet, because he was high-priest, he prophesied. Thus the Holy Ghost operates by means of the holy Sacraments, through good and bad priests, using them as His instruments to effect good.

#### SATURDAY IN THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Jer.* xviii. 18—23.) IN THOSE DAYS, The wicked Jews said to one another: Come, and let us invent devices against Jeremias: for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet: come, and let us strike him with the tongue, and let us give no heed to all his words. Give heed to me, O Lord, and hear the voice of my adversaries. Shall evil be rendered for good, because they have digged a pit for my soul? Remember that I have stood in thy sight, to speak good for them, and to turn away thy indignation from them. Therefore, deliver up their children to famine, and bring them into the hands of the sword: let their wives be bereaved of children, and widows: and let the husbands be slain by death: let their young men be stabbed with the sword in battle. Let a cry be heard out of their houses: for thou shalt bring the robber upon them suddenly: because they have digged a pit to take me, and have hid snares for my feet. But thou, O Lord, knowest all their counsel against me unto death: forgive not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from thy sight: let them be overthrown before thy eyes, in the time of thy wrath do thou destroy them, O Lord, our God.

EXPLANATION. The Church regards the Prophet Jeremias as a type of our Saviour; she, therefore, makes use of this lesson in which the prophet turns to God for



help and prays Him to send misfortunes and sufferings upon the Jews that they may be converted. Jeremias' enemies sought to put him to death, that they might no longer hear his reproaches. Never wish evil to your enemies, except with this motive, that they may see their injustice and be converted to God.

GOSPEL. (*John* xii. 10—36.) AT THAT TIME, The chief priests thought to kill Lazarus also: because many of the Jews by reason of him went away, and believed in Jesus. And on the next day a great multitude, that was come to the festival day, when they had heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem: took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried: Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel. And Jesus found a young ass, and sat upon it, as it is written: Fear not daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh sitting on an ass's colt. These things his disciples did not know at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of him: and that they had done these things to him. The multitude therefore gave testimony, which was with him when he called Lazarus out of the grave, and raised him from the dead. For which reason also the people came to meet him: because they heard that he had done this miracle. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves: Do you see that we prevail nothing? behold, the whole world is gone after him. Now there were certain Gentiles, among them that came up to adore on the festival day. These therefore came to Philip who was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying: Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: again Andrew and Philip told Jesus. But Jesus answered them saying: The hour is come that the Son of Man shall be glorified. Amen, amen I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground, die; itself remaineth



alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it: and he that hateth his life in this world, keepeth it unto life eternal. If any man minister to me, let him follow me: and where I am, there also shall my minister be. If any man minister to me, him will my Father honor. Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause I came unto this hour. Father glorify thy name. A voice therefore came from heaven: I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The multitude therefore that stood and heard, said that it thundered. Others said: An angel spoke to him. Jesus answered, and said: This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of the world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself. (Now this he said, signifying what death he should die.) The multitude answered him: We have heard out of the law, that Christ abideth forever: and how sayest thou: The Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man? Jesus therefore said to them: Yet a little while, the light is among you. Walk whilst you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not: and he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. Whilst you have the light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light. These things Jesus spoke: and he went away, and hid himself from them.

EXPLANATION. The raising of Lazarus from the dead brought many to believe in Jesus, even Gentiles came to see Him and hear His teachings. This increased the hatred of the Pharisees to the highest degree, and not only Jesus but Lazarus was to be put to death, they hoping thereby to extinguish every recollection of his having been restored by Jesus. The hour had, however, come when Jesus, according to the eternal decrees of God, was to give Himself up voluntarily to death, and willed to be



like a grain of wheat buried in the earth, that through the fruits of His death, that is, His merits, the sinner might receive life. By the words: He that loveth his life, shall lose it, Jesus wishes us to understand that he who yields to the evil inclinations of his heart, shall perish, but he who overcomes and governs them, shall be saved; such are His true servants and followers. In reply to the prayer Jesus made, that His Father should glorify Him, a voice from heaven was heard which the sensual Jews did not understand, for God's voice is understood only by him who humbly and willingly receives it. By the words: And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, (on the cross) will draw all things to myself, Jesus teaches us, that by His merits, His example, and the power of His love, He will draw our souls to Himself. O let yourself be drawn to Him by the grace which He offers you so often, and by the love which He shows you on the cross. Say often to Jesus with St. Augustine: "Lord, take me from myself, and give me to Thyself," make me one with Thee and Thy love, permit not that I be separated from Thee, and fall into darkness, whence there is no deliverance.

## INSTRUCTION ON PALM SUNDAY.



### *Why is this day called Palm Sunday?*

IN memory of our Saviour's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, when the multitude strewed palm branches before Him, for which reason the Church, on this day, blesses palms, and carries them in procession.

### *Why are palms blessed?*

That those who carry them with devotion, or keep them in their houses, may receive protection of soul and body, as prayed for in the blessing; that those who carry the palms may, by means of the prayers of the Church, adorn their souls with good works and thus, in spirit, meet the Saviour; that, through Christ whose members we are, we may conquer the kingdom of death and darkness, and be made worthy to share in His glorious resurrection and triumphant entrance into heaven. St. Augustine writes of the palms: "They are the emblem of praise, and sign of victory, because the Lord by death conquered death, and with the sign of victory, the cross, overcame the devil, the



prince of death." Therefore, preceded by the cross, we go in procession around the church singing hymns of praise; when we come to the church door, we find it locked; the priest knocks at it with the cross. Heaven was closed to us by the sin of Adam, and it is opened to us by reconciliation through Jesus on the cross.

To move us to compassion for the suffering Redeemer, the Church, in the person of Christ, cries in lamenting tones at the Introit: O Lord, remove not Thy help to a distance from me, look towards my defence: save me from the lion's mouth, and my lowness from the horns of the unicorns. O God, my God! look on me, why hast Thou forsaken me? Far from my salvation are the words of my sins. O Lord! Remove not, &c. (*Ps.* xxi.)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Almighty and everlasting God! who didst vouchsafe to send Thy Son, our Saviour, to take upon Him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, to give mankind an example of humility; mercifully grant, that we may both follow the example of His patience, and be made partakers of His Resurrection. Through the same &c.

EPISTLE. (*Philip.* ii. 5—11.) BRETHREN, let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery himself to be equal to God; but debased himself, taking the form of a servant, being made to the likeness of men, and in shape found as a man. He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, God also hath exalted him, and hath given him a name, which is above every name: that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess, that the Lord, Jesus Christ, is in the glory of God, the Father.

INSTRUCTION. In this epistle, the apostle urges us in a special manner to humility by which we are made like to Christ, our Lord, who putting off the majesty of His divinity, became man, and humbled Himself in obedience to the ignominious death of the cross. "Would that all





might hear," exclaims St. Gregory, "that God resists the proud, and gives His grace to the humble! Would that all might hear: Thou dust and ashes, why dost thou exalt thyself? Would that all might hear the words of the Lord: Learn of me, because I am humble of heart. The only-begotten Son of God assumed the form of our weakness, suffered mockery, insult and torments for the purpose that the humble God might teach man not to be proud."

ASPIRATION. Ah, that my sentiments were as Thine, O my Lord, Jesus! who so humbled Thyself and wast obedient to the most ignominious death of



the cross. Grant me, I beseech Thee, O my Redeemer, the grace diligently to follow Thee in humility.

Instead of the gospel the Passion, that is, the history of the sufferings of our Lord according to St. Matthew, (chaps. xxvi., xxvii.) is read in this day's Mass, and neither incense, nor lights are used, nor is the *Dominus vobiscum* said, thus signifying that Jesus, the Light of the world, was taken away by death, and that the faith and devotion of the apostles was shaken, and became almost extinct. When reading the History of the Passion at the words: and bowing his head, he gave up the ghost, the priest with all the congregation kneel and meditate for a short time on the great mystery of the death of Jesus, by which our redemption was effected.

At the blessing of the palms, the priest reads the following

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxi. 1—9.) AT THAT TIME, when Jesus drew nigh to Jerusalem, and was come to Bethphage, unto Mount Olivet; then he sent two disciples, saying to them: Go ye into the village that is over against you, and immediately ye will find an ass tied, and a colt with her; loose them, and bring them to me; and if any man shall say any thing to you, say ye that the Lord hath need of them, and forthwith he will let them go. Now all this was done, that the word might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the prophet, saying: Tell ye the daughter of Sion, behold thy king cometh to thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt, the foal of her that is used to the yoke. And the disciples going, did as Jesus commanded them. And they brought the ass and the colt, and laid their garments upon them, and made him sit thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; and others cut down boughs from the trees, and strewed them in the way; and the multitudes that went before and that followed, cried, saying: Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.





*Why did Jesus enter Jerusalem so solemnly and yet so humbly?*

To show that He was the promised Messiah and King of the Jews, as foretold by the Prophet Zacharias, (ix. 9.) and that He had come to conquer the world, the flesh and the devil, for which He used the weapons of meekness, humility, and poverty and therefore came seated not on a proud steed but like a poor person on the weak colt of an ass, entering Jerusalem in all humility, thus teaching us that meekness and indifference to earthly goods are our best weapons to gain victory over our enemies. Jesus entered Jerusalem so humbly to perfect the type of the Paschal lamb, for on this day the lambs which were to be sacrificed in the temple on the following Friday, were solemnly led into the city.



Thus Jesus like a meek lamb, entered the city of Jerusalem to be sacrificed for us.

*Why did the people meet Christ with palm branches?*

This happened by the inspiration of God, to indicate that Christ, the conqueror of death, hell and the devil, would reconcile man with God, and open the heavenly Jerusalem to him, for the palm is the emblem of victory and peace. By this we learn also the inconsistency and mutability of the world; for the very people who on this day met Christ with palm branches exclaiming: "Hosanna to the Son of David," a few days later shouted: "Crucify him! Crucify him!" — Learn from this to despise the praise of the world, and be careful not to imitate the inconsistency of this people by crucifying Him again by sin (*Heb. vi. 6.*) after having received Him with joy in holy Communion.

*How should we take part in the procession on this day?*

With the pious intention of meeting Christ in spirit, with the devout people of Jerusalem, adoring Him, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David, Hosanna to Him who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna to the Highest!" and with the heart-felt prayer to Jesus for His grace, that with Him we may conquer the world, the flesh and the devil, and thus merit to be received into the heavenly Jerusalem.

PETITION. O Jesus, Tree of Life! ever fresh and fruitful, grant that we may by love be like palms ever green, and by the practice of good works blossom and bring forth fruit.

## THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,

ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW, CHAP. XXVI., XXVII.

AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: You know that after two days shall be the Pasch, and the Son of Man shall be delivered up to be crucified. Then were gathered together the chief priests and the ancients of the people into the palace of the high-priest, who was called Caiphas. And they consulted together, that, by subtilty, they might apprehend Jesus and put him to death. But they said: Not on the



festival day, lest there should be a tumult among the people. And when Jesus was in Bethania, in the house of Simon the leper, there came to him a woman having an alabaster-box of precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he was at table. And the disciples seeing it, had indignation, saying: To what purpose is this waste? For this might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. And Jesus knowing it, said to them: Why do you trouble this woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For the poor you have always with you: but me you have not always. For she, in pouring this ointment upon my body, hath done it for my burial. Amen, I say to you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which she hath done, shall be told for a memory of her.

Then went one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, to the chief priests, and said to them: What will you give me, and I will deliver him unto you? But they appointed for him thirty pieces of silver. And from thenceforth he sought opportunity to betray him.

And on the first day of the Azymes, the disciples came to Jesus, saying: Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Pasch? But Jesus said: Go ye into the city to a certain man, and say to him: The master saith: my time is near at hand, I will keep the Pasch at thy house with my disciples. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them, and they prepared the Pasch. Now when it was evening, he sat down with his twelve disciples. And whilst they were eating, he said: Amen, I say to you, that one of you is about to betray me. And they being very much troubled, began every one to say: Is it I, Lord? But he answering, said: He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of Man indeed goeth as it is written of him;



but woe to that man, by whom the Son of Man shall be betrayed: it were better for that man, if he had not been born. And Judas that betrayed him, answering, said: Is it I, Rabbi? He said to him: Thou hast said it. And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed and broke, and gave to his disciples, and said: Take ye and eat: This is my body. And taking the chalice he gave thanks: and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this. For this is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many for the remission of sins. And I say to you, I will not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until that day, when I shall drink it new with you in the kingdom of my Father. And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to Mount Olivet.

Then Jesus saith to them: All you shall be scandalized in me this night. For it is written: I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be dispersed. But after I shall be risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. And Peter answering, said to him: Though all shall be scandalized in thee, I will never be scandalized. Jesus said to him: Amen, I say to thee, that in this night, before the cock crow, thou wilt deny me thrice. Peter saith to him: Though I should die with thee, I will not deny thee. And in like manner said all the disciples. Then Jesus came with them to a country place which is called Gethsemani, and he said to his disciples: Sit you here, till I go yonder, and pray. And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to grow sorrowful and to be sad.

Then he saith to them: My soul is sorrowful even unto death; stay you here, and watch with me. And going a little further he fell upon his face, praying, and saying: O my Father! if it is possible, let this chalice pass from me. Nevertheless not as I will,



but as thou wilt. And he cometh to his disciples, and findeth them asleep; and he saith to Peter: What! could you not watch one hour with me? Watch ye, and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Again he went the second time, and prayed, saying: O my Father! if this chalice cannot pass away except I drink it, thy will be done. And he cometh again, and findeth them asleep; for their eyes were heavy. And leaving them, he went away again, and he prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then he cometh to his disciples, and saith to them: Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go; behold, he is at hand that will betray me.

As he yet spoke, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the ancients of the people. And he that betrayed him, gave them a sign, saying: Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he: hold him fast. And forthwith coming to Jesus, he said: Hail, rabbi! And he kissed him. And Jesus said to him: Friend! whereto art thou come? Then they came up and laid hands on Jesus, and held him. And behold one of them that were with Jesus, stretching forth his hand, drew out his sword; and striking the servant of the high-priest, cut off his ear. Then Jesus saith to him: Put up again thy sword into its place: for all that take the sword shall perish by the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot ask my Father, and he will give me presently more than twelve legions of Angels? How then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that so it must be done? In that same hour Jesus said to the multitude: You are come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to apprehend me.



I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and you laid not hands on me. Now all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then the disciples all leaving him, fled away.

But they holding Jesus, led him to Caiphas, the high-priest, where the scribes and the ancients were assembled. But Peter followed him afar off to the high-priest's palace. And going in, he sat with the servants, to see the end. Now the chief priests and whole council sought false witness against Jesus, that they might put him to death: and they found not, though many false witnesses had come in. And last of all, there came two false witnesses. And they said: This man said: I am able to destroy the temple of God, and in three days to rebuild it. And the high-priest rising up, said to him: Answerest thou nothing to the things which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the high-priest said to him: I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us if thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith to him: Thou hast said it. Nevertheless I say to you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man, sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high-priest rent his garments, saying: He hath blasphemed, what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now you have heard the blasphemy. What think you? But they answering, said: He is guilty of death.

Then they spit in his face, and buffeted him, and others struck his face with the palms of their hands, saying: Prophecy unto us, O Christ! who is he that struck thee? But Peter sat without in the palace, and there came to him a servant maid, saying: Thou also wast with Jesus the Galilean. But he denied before them all, saying: I know not what thou sayest. And as he went out of the gate, another maid saw him,



and she saith to them that were there: This man also was with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath: I do not know the man. And after a little while, they that stood by came and said to Peter: Surely thou also art one of them: for even thy speech doth discover thee. Then he began to curse and to swear that he knew not the man.

And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus which he had said: Before the cock crow, thou wilt deny me thrice. And going forth, he wept bitterly.

And when the morning was come, all the chief priests and ancients of the people held a council against Jesus, to put him to death. And they brought him bound, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate, the governor.

Then Judas, who betrayed him, seeing that he was condemned, repenting himself, brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the ancients, saying: I have sinned, in betraying innocent blood. But they said: What is that to us? look thou to it.

And casting down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed: and went and hanged himself with a halter. But the chief priests having taken the pieces of silver, said: It is not lawful to put them into the corbona, because it is the price of blood. And having consulted together, they bought with them the potter's field, to be a burying-place for strangers. Wherefore that field was called Haceldama, that is the field of blood, even to this day.

Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremias the prophet, saying: And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they prized of the children of Israel. And they



gave them unto the potter's field, as the Lord appointed to me.

And Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, saying: Art thou the king of the Jews? Jesus saith to him: Thou sayest it. And when he was accused by the chief priests and ancients, he answered nothing. Then Pilate saith to him: Dost thou not hear how great testimonies they allege against thee?

And he answered him not to any word: so that the governor wondered exceedingly.

Now upon the solemn day the governor was accustomed to release to the people one prisoner, whom they would. And he had then a notorious prisoner, that was called Barabbas. They, therefore, being gathered together, Pilate said: Whom will you that I release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus, who is called Christ? For he knew that through envy they had delivered him up. And as he was sitting on the judgment-seat, his wife sent to him, saying. Have thou nothing to do with that just man. For I have suffered many things this day in a dream on account of him. But the chief priests and ancients persuaded the people, that they should ask Barabbas, and make Jesus away. And the governor answering, said to them: Which will you have of the two to be released unto you? But they said: Barabbas. Pilate saith to them: What shall I do then with Jesus that is called Christ? They all say: Let him be crucified. The governor said to them: Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying: Let him be crucified. And Pilate seeing that he prevailed nothing, but that rather a tumult was made; having taken water, washed his hands before the people, saying: I am innocent of the blood of this just man: look you to it. And all the people answering, said: His blood be upon us, and upon our children. Then he released to them



Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to them to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor, taking Jesus into the hall, gathered together unto him the whole band. And stripping him, they put a scarlet cloak about him. And plaiting a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand. And bowing the knee before him, they mocked him, saying: Hail, king of the Jews!

And spitting upon him, they took the reed, and struck his head. And after they had mocked him, they took off the cloak from him, and put on him his own garments, and led him away to crucify him.

And going out, they found a man of Cyrene, named Simon; him they forced to take up his cross. And they came to the place that is called Golgotha, which is, the place of Calvary. And they gave him wine to drink mingled with gall. And when he had tasted, he would not drink. And after they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots; that the word might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: They divided my garments among them; and upon my vesture they cast lots. And they sat down, and watched him. And they put over his head his cause written: This is Jesus, the King of the Jews. Then were there crucified with him two thieves; the one on the right hand, and the other on the left. And they that passed by blasphemed him, wagging their heads, and saying: Vah, thou who destroyest the temple of God, and in three days buildest it up again, save thy own self: if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. In like manner also, the chief priests with the scribes and ancients, mocking, said: He saved others; himself he cannot save: if he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in



God, let him deliver him now if he will save him: for he said: I am the Son of God.

And the self-same thing the thieves also, that were crucified with him, reproached him with. Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the earth, until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying: Eli, Eli, lamma sabac-thani? that is: My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me? And some of them that stood there and heard, said: This man calleth for Elias. And immediately one of them, running, took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar; and put it on a reed and gave him to drink. And the others said: Stay, let us see whether Elias will come to deliver him. And Jesus again crying with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

And behold the veil of the temple was rent in two, from the top even to the bottom, and the earth quaked, and the rocks were rent; and the graves were opened: and many bodies of the saints that had slept arose: and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection, came into the holy city, and appeared to many. Now the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, having seen the earthquake and the things that were done, were greatly afraid, saying: Indeed this was the Son of God. And there were there many women afar off, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him; among whom was Mary Magdalen, and Mary, the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee. And when it was evening, there came a certain rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded that the body should be delivered. And Joseph taking the body, wrapped it up in a clean linen cloth. And laid it in his own new monument, which he had hewed out in a rock;



and he rolled a great stone to the door of the monument, and went his way. And there was Mary Magdalen, and the other Mary sitting over against the sepulchre.

And the next day, which followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees came together to Pilate, saying: Sir, we have remembered that seducer said, while he was yet alive: After three days I will rise again. Command, therefore, the sepulchre to be guarded until the third day; lest his disciples come and steal him away, and say to the people: He is risen from the dead. So the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said to them: You have a guard, go guard it as you know. And they departing, made the sepulchre sure, with guards, sealing the stone.

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## INSTRUCTION ON HOLY WEEK.

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*Why is this week called Holy Week?*

**T**HIS week is called Holy Week because during it we celebrate the most holy mysteries of our religion, and in all her offices and ceremonies the Church refers in quiet mournfulness to the passion and death of our Redeemer.

*What remarkable things did Christ do during the first four days of this week?*

After He had entered the temple at Jerusalem on Palm Sunday amidst the greatest rejoicings of the people, and was saluted by the children with that cry of joy: "Hosanna to the Son of David," He drove the buyers and sellers out of the temple, and when He had spent the entire day in preaching and healing the sick, He went in the evening to Bethania, where He remained over night in Lazarus' house, because in Jerusalem no one wished to receive Him for fear of His enemies. The three following days He spent in Jerusalem, teaching in the temple, and passing the night in prayer on Mount Olivet. In His sermons during these days He strove especially to convince the Jewish priests,



the Doctors of the Law and the Pharisees, that He was really the Messiah, and that they would commit a terrible sin by putting Him to death; that they would bring themselves and the whole Jewish nation to destruction. This ruin of the people He illustrated most plainly causing the fig-tree to wither under His curse, and by foretelling the destruction of the city and the temple of Jerusalem. He disputed with them, and confounded them, and brought them publicly to shame by parables, so that out of anger and hatred they with one mind determined to kill Him. The impious Judas aided the most in the execution of their design; through avarice he sold Him for thirty pieces of silver (about eighteen dollars in our money) to the chief priests, and the next day, Thursday, became His betrayer and delivered Him over into their hands.

### MONDAY AFTER PALM SUNDAY.

LESSON. (*Isai.* L. 5—10.) IN THOSE DAYS, Isaias said: The Lord God hath opened my ear, and I do not resist: I have not gone back. I have given my body to the strikers, and my cheeks to them that plucked them: I have not turned away my face from them that rebuked me, and spit upon me. The Lord God is my helper, therefore am I not confounded: therefore have I set my face as a most hard rock, and I know that I shall not be confounded. He is near that justifieth me, who will contend with me? let us stand together, who is my adversary? let him come near to me. Behold the Lord God is my helper: who is he that shall condemn me? Lo they shall all be destroyed as a garment, the moth shall eat them up. Who is there among you that feareth the Lord, that heareth the voice of his servant? let him that hath walked in darkness, and hath no light, hope in the name of the Lord, and lean upon his God.

EXPLANATION. All the holy Fathers agree that Isaias here prophesies of Christ, who in accordance with His Father's will, gave Himself up without uttering one word of complaint to the most ignominious sufferings for us, and strengthened by divine assistance, patiently sub-



mitted to all the blows, torments, and insults of His enemies. But they did not escape just punishment, for their guilty consciences devoured them interiorly, as a moth consumes a garment, and the memory of them disappeared from the earth. Let us put our trust in God, if, with Christ, we are surrounded by sufferings and distress, finding no help, for He will be our Redeemer and our Helper.

GOSPEL. (*John* xii. 1—9.) Now Jesus, six days before the Pasch, came to Bethania, where Lazarus had been dead, whom Jesus raised to life. And they made him a supper there: and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of them that were at table with him. Mary therefore took a pound of ointment of right spikenard, of great price, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Then one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, he that was about to betray him said: Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? Now he said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and having the purse, carried the things that were put therein.

Jesus therefore said: Let her alone, that she may keep it against the day of my burial, for the poor you have always with you: but me you have not always. A great multitude therefore of the Jews knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus's sake only, but that they might see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead.

INSTRUCTION. We should also, like Mary Magdalen, anoint the Saviour by diligently performing good works, and thus become, as the holy Apostle says, a good odor unto Christ. (*ii Cor.* ii. 15.) The conduct of the traitor Judas should serve us as a warning not to be carried away by attachment to temporal riches, to avarice, and by it to greater crimes. Judas did not become a great sinner at once, he loved money and so grew cold to the love of God; seduced by avarice, he became a miser, a traitor to his Master and a suicide. Strive, therefore, to suppress your



evil inclinations at the moment of their commencement, that they may not bring you into sin, and render you miserable like Judas.

### TUESDAY AFTER PALM SUNDAY.

LESSON. (*Jer.* xi. 18—20.) IN THOSE DAYS, Jeremias said: Thou, O Lord, hast shewed me, and I have known: then thou shewedst me their doings. And I was as a meek lamb, that is carried to be a victim: and I knew not that they had devised counsels against me, saying: Let us put wood on his bread, and cut him off from the land of the living, and let his name be remembered no more. But thou, O Lord of Sabbath, who judgest justly, and triest the reins and the hearts, let me see thy revenge on them: for to thee have I revealed my cause.

EXPLANATION. Jeremias was unjustly persecuted, but showed only meekness to his persecutors: so Christ silently permitted Himself like a meek lamb to be nailed by His enemies to the hard wood of the cross. Learn from this, Christian soul, to follow the example of the meek Lamb of God, and silently bear all evils. In reference to the prophet's prayer for vengeance on his enemies, St. Augustine remarks: "It is well wishing, not vengeance, when the just rejoices that punishment comes to the impious, for he has no pleasure in the sinner's destruction, whose conversion he wishes, but he desires justice by which many are converted."

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## THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,

ACCORDING TO ST. MARK, CHAP. XIV. AND XV.

AT THAT TIME, The feast of the Pasch and of the Azymes was after two days; and the chief priest and the scribes sought how they might, by some wile lay hold on him, and kill him. But they said: Not on a festival day, lest there should be a tumult among the people. And when he was in Bethania, in the house of Simon the leper, and was at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of pre-



cious spikenard; and breaking the alabaster box, she poured it out upon his head. Now there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said: Why was this waste of the ointment made? For this ointment might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and given to the poor. And they murmured against her. But Jesus said: Let her alone, why do you molest her? She hath wrought a good work upon me. For the poor you have always with you, and whensoever you will, you may do them good; but me you have not always. What she had, she hath done; she is come beforehand to anoint my body for the burial. Amen, I say to you: wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which she hath done shall be told for a memorial of her. And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests, to betray him to them. Who hearing it were glad; and they promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him. Now on the first day of the unleavened bread, when they sacrificed the Pasch, the disciples say to him: Whither wilt thou that we go and prepare for thee to eat the Pasch. And he sendeth two of his disciples, and saith to them: Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man carrying a pitcher of water; follow him, and whithersoever he shall go in, say to the master of the house: The Master saith: Where is my refectory, that I may eat the Pasch with my disciples? And he will show you a large dining-room furnished; and there prepare ye for us. And his disciples went their way, and came into the city; and they found as he had told them, and they prepared the Pasch. And when evening was come, he cometh with the twelve. And when they were at table and eating, Jesus saith: Amen, I say to you, one of you that eateth with me shall betray me. But they began to



be sorrowful, and to say to him one by one: Is it I? Who saith to them: One of the twelve, who dippeth his hand in the dish with me. And the Son of Man indeed goeth, as it is written of him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of God shall be betrayed. It were better for him, if that man had not been born. And whilst they were eating, Jesus took bread; and blessing, broke, and gave to them, and said: Take ye, This is my body. And having taken the chalice, giving thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank of it; and he said to them: This is my blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many. Amen, I say to you, that I will drink no more of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it new in the kingdom of God. And when they had sung a hymn, they went forth to the mount of Olives. And Jesus saith to them: You will all be scandalized in my regard this night; for it is written: I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep shall be dispersed. But after I shall be risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. But Peter saith to him: Although all shall be scandalized in thee, yet not I. And Jesus saith to him: Amen, I say to thee, to-day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. But he spoke the more vehemently: Although I should die together with thee, I will not deny thee. And in like manner also said they all. And they came to a farm called Gethsemani. And he saith to his disciples: Sit you here, while I pray. And he taketh Peter, and James, and John with him; and he began to fear, and to be heavy. And he saith to them: My soul is sorrowful even unto death: stay you here, and watch. And when he had gone forward a little, he fell flat on the ground: and he prayed that, if it might be, the hour might pass from him: and he saith: Abba, Father, all things are possible



to thee, remove this chalice from me, but not what I will, but what thou wilt. And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping. And he saith to Peter: Simon, sleepest thou? couldst thou not watch one hour? Watch ye, and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. And going away again, he prayed, saying the same words. And when he returned, he found them again asleep, (for their eyes were heavy) and they knew not what to answer him. And he cometh the third time, and saith to them: Sleep ye now, and take your rest. It is enough, the hour is come; behold the Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go. Behold he that will betray me is at hand. And while he was yet speaking, cometh Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests, and the scribes, and the ancients. But he that betrayed him had given them a sign, saying: Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he, lay hold on him, and lead him away carefully. And when he was come, immediately going up to him, he saith: Hail, Rabbi; and he kissed him. But they laid hands on him, and held him. And one of them that stood by, drawing a sword, struck a servant of the chief priest, and cut off his ear. And Jesus answering, said to them: Are you come out as to a robber with swords and staves to apprehend me? I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and you did not lay hands on me. But that the Scriptures may be fulfilled. Then his disciples leaving him, all fled away. And a certain young man followed him, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and they laid hold on him. But he, casting off the linen cloth, fled from them naked. And they brought Jesus to the high-priest; and all the priests and the scribes and the an-



cients were assembled together. And Peter followed him afar off even into the court of the high-priest; and he sat with the servants at the fire, and warmed himself. And the chief priests and all the council sought for evidence against Jesus that they might put him to death, and they found none. For many bore false witness against him, and their evidence were not agreeing. And some rising up, bore false witness against him, saying: We heard him say: I will destroy this temple made with hands, and within three days I will build another not made with hands. And their witness did not agree. And the high-priest rising up in the midst, asked Jesus, saying: Answerest thou nothing to the things that are laid to thy charge by these men? But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high-priest asked him, and said to him: Art thou the Christ the Son of the blessed God? And Jesus said to him: I am. And you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high-priest rending his garments, saith: What need we any further witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy. What think you? Who all condemned him to be guilty of death. And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say to him: Prophecy; and the servants struck him with the palms of their hands. Now when Peter was in the court below, there cometh to him one of the maid-servants of the high-priest; and when she had seen Peter warming himself, looking on him, she saith: Thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. But he denied, saying: I neither know nor understand what thou sayest. And he went forth before the court, and the cock crew. And again a maid-servant seeing him, began to say to the standers-by: This is one of them. But he denied again. And after a while, they



that stood by said again to Peter: Surely thou art one of them, for thou also art a Galilean. But he began to curse and swear, saying: I know not this man of whom you speak. And immediately the cock crew again. And Peter remembered the word that Jesus had said to him: Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he began to weep. (*Chap. xv.*) And straightway in the morning the chief priests holding a consultation with the ancients and the scribes, and the whole council, binding Jesus, led him away, and delivered him to Pilate. And Pilate asked him: Art thou the king of the Jews? But he answering, saith to him: Thou sayest it. And the chief priests accused him in many things. And Pilate again asked him, saying: Answerest thou nothing? behold in how many things they accuse thee. But Jesus still answered nothing; so that Pilate wondered. Now on the festival day he was wont to release unto them one of the prisoners, whomsoever they demanded. And there was one called Barabbas, who was put in prison with some seditious men, who in the sedition had committed murder. And when the multitude was come up, they began to desire that he would do as he had ever done unto them. And Pilate answered them, and said: Will you that I release to you the king of the Jews? For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him up out of envy. But the chief priests moved the people that he should rather release Barabbas to them. And Pilate again answering, saith to them: What will you then that I do with the king of the Jews? But they again cried out: Crucify him. And Pilate saith to them: Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more: Crucify him. And so Pilate being willing to satisfy the people, released to them Barabbas, and delivered up Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified. And the soldiers



led him away into the court of the palace, and they called together the whole band; and they clothed him with purple, and plating a crown of thorns, they put it upon him. And they began to salute him: Hail, king of the Jews. And they struck his head with a reed: and they did spit on him, and bowing their knees, they adored him. And after they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own garments on him; and they led him out to crucify him. And they forced one Simon, a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and of Rufus, to take up his cross. And they bring him into the place called Golgotha, which being interpreted is, the place of Calvary. And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh; but he took it not. And crucifying him, they divided his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take. And it was the third hour, and they crucified him. And the inscription of his cause was written over: The King of the Jews. And with him they crucify two thieves, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith: And with the wicked he was reputed. And they that passed by blasphemed him, wagging their heads, and saying: Vah, thou that destroyest the temple of God, and in three days buildest it up again, save thyself, coming down from the cross. In like manner also the chief priests mocking said with the Scribes one to another: He saved others, himself he cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him, reviled him. And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole earth until the ninth hour; and at the ninth hour Jesus crièd out with a loud voice, saying: Eloi, Eloi, lamma sabathani? Which is, being interpreted: My God, my God, why hast thou for-



saken me? And some of the standers-by hearing, said: Behold, he calleth Elias. And one running and filling a sponge with vinegar, and putting it upon a reed, gave him to drink, saying: Stay, let us see if Elias will come to take him down. And Jesus having cried out with a loud voice, gave up the ghost. (Here all kneel and pause.) And the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom; and the centurion who stood over against him, seeing that crying out in this manner he had given up the ghost, said: Indeed this man was the Son of God. And there were also women looking on afar off, among whom was Mary Magdalen, and Mary the Mother of James the Less and of Joseph, and Salome; who also when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered to him, and many other women that came up with him to Jerusalem. And when evening was now come, (because it was the Parasceve, that is, the day before the Sabbath,) Joseph of Arimathea, a noble counsellor, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, came and went in boldly to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. But Pilate wondered that he should be already dead; and sending for the centurion, he asked him if he were already dead. And when he had understood it by the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. And Joseph buying fine linen, and taking him down, wrapped him up in the fine linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and he rolled a stone to the door of the sepulchre.

**WEDNESDAY AFTER PALM SUNDAY.**

LESSON. (*Isai.* lxii, 11., to lxiii. 1—7.) THUS said the Lord God: Tell the daughter of Sion: Behold thy Saviour cometh: behold his reward is with him. Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bosra, this beautiful one in his robe, walking in



the greatness of his strength. I, that speak justice, and am a defender to save. Why then is thy apparel red, and thy garments like theirs that tread in the wine-press? I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the Gentiles there is not a man with me: I have trampled on them in my indignation, and have trodden them down in my wrath, and their blood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have stained all my apparel. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, the year of my redemption is come. I looked about and there was none to help: I sought, and there was none to give aid: and my own arm hath saved from me, and my indignation itself hath helped me. And I have trodden down the people in my wrath, and have made them drunk in my indignation, and have brought down their strength to the earth. I will remember the tender mercies of the Lord, the praise of the Lord for all the things that the Lord hath bestowed on us.

EXPLANATION. Once more the prophet's words point to the Saviour, and describe His triumphal entrance into Jerusalem, where He went to accomplish the work of redemption, which He had always in His heart and before His eyes; he refers to His victories over all His enemies, the world, and the devil, whom He had trampled on and destroyed as the wine-presser does the grapes. The day of Christ's death was also the day of vengeance on His enemies, whom He overcame on the cross. The prophet who foresaw all this, thanks God in the last words of this lesson, and we also are called upon to thank Christ for our Redemption.

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## THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,

ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE, CHAP. XXII. AND XXIII.

AT THAT TIME, The feast of unleavened bread, which is called the Pasch, was at hand. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might put



Jesus to death; but they feared the people. And Satan entered into Judas, who was surnamed Iscariot, one of the twelve; and he went, and discoursed with the chief priests and the magistrates, how he might betray him to them. And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money. And he promised; and he sought opportunity to betray him in the absence of the multitude. And the day of the unleavened bread came, on which it was necessary that the Pasch should be killed. And he sent Peter and John, saying: Go and prepare for us the Pasch, that we may eat. But they said: Where wilt thou that we prepare? And he said to them: Behold, as you go into the city, there shall meet you a man carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in, and you shall say to the good man of the house: The master saith to thee: Where is the guest-chamber, where I may eat the Pasch with my disciples? And he will show you a large dining-room furnished; and there prepare. And they going, found as he had said to them, and made ready the Pasch. And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said to them: With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you before I suffer. For I say to you, that from this time I will not eat it, till it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And having taken the chalice he gave thanks, and said: Take and divide it among you. For I say to you that I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, till the kingdom of God come. And taking bread, he gave thanks, and brake, and gave to them, saying: This is my body, which is given for you: do this for a commemoration of me. In like manner the chalice also, after he had supped, saying: This is the chalice, the new testament of my blood, which shall be shed for you. But yet behold, the hand of him that betrayeth



me is with me on the table. And the Son of man indeed goeth, according to that which is determined; but yet woe to that man by whom he shall be betrayed. And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing. And there was also a strife amongst them, which of them should seem to be greater. And he said to them: The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and they that have power over them, are called beneficent. But you not so; but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is the leader, as he that serveth. For which is greater, he that sitteth at table, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at table? but I am in the midst of you, as he that serveth; and you are they who have continued with me in my temptations. And I dispose to you, as my Father hath disposed to me, a kingdom: that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and may sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And the Lord said: Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not: and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren. Who said to him: Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and to death. And he said: I say to thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, till thou thrice deniest that thou knowest me. And he said to them: When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, did you want anything? But they said: Nothing. Then said he unto them: But now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a scrip; and he that hath not, let him sell his coat and buy a sword. For I say to you, that this that is written must yet be fulfilled in me: And he was reckoned among the wicked: for the things concerning me have an end. But they said: Lord, behold here are two swords



And he said to them: It is enough. And going out he went according to his custom to the Mount of Olives. And his disciples also followed him. And when he was come to the place, he said to them: Pray, lest ye enter into temptation. And he was withdrawn away from them a stone's cast; and kneeling down he prayed, saying: Father, if thou wilt, remove this chalice from me; but yet not my will, but thine be done. And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony, he prayed the longer. And his sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground. And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow. And he said to them: Why sleep you? Arise, pray, lest you enter into temptation. As he was yet speaking, behold a multitude; and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near to Jesus to kiss him. And Jesus said to him: Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss? And they that were about him, seeing what would follow, said to him: Lord, shall we strike with the sword? And one of them struck the servant of the high-priest, and cut off his right ear. But Jesus answering, said: Suffer ye thus far. And when he had touched his ear, he healed him. And Jesus said to the chief priests and the magistrates of the temple, and the ancients that were come unto him: Are you come out, as it were against a thief, with swords and clubs? When I was daily with you in the temple, you did not stretch forth your hands against me; but this is your hour, and the power of darkness. And apprehending him, they led him to the high-priest's house; but Peter followed afar off. And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were sitting about it, Peter was in the midst of them. Whom when a certain servant



maid had seen him sitting at the light, and had earnestly beheld him, she said: This man also was with him. But he denied, saying: Woman, I know him not. And after a little while, another seeing him, said: Thou also art one of them. But Peter said: O man, I am not. And after the space as it were of one hour, another certain man affirmed, saying: Of a truth this man was also with him; for he is also a Galilean. And Peter said: Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, as he was yet speaking, the cock crew. And the Lord turning looked on Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, as he had said: Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter going out wept bitterly. And the men that held him, mocked him, and struck him. And they blind-folded him, and smote him on the face. And they asked him, saying: Prophecy, who is it that struck thee? And many other things blaspheming, they said against him. And as soon as it was day, the ancients of the people, and the chief priests, and scribes, came together, and they brought him into their council, saying: If thou be the Christ, tell us. And he said to them: If I shall tell you, you will not believe me; and if I shall also ask you, you will not answer me, nor let me go. But hereafter the Son of man shall be sitting on the right hand of the power of God. Then said they all: Art thou then the Son of God? Who said: You say that I am. And they said: What need we any further testimony? For we ourselves have heard it from his own mouth. (Chap. xxiii.) And the whole multitude of them rising up, led him to Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying: We have found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, and saying that he is Christ the king. And Pilate asked him, saying: Art thou the king of the Jews? But he answering,



said: Thou sayest it. And Pilate said to the chief priests and to the multitudes: I find no cause in this man. But they were more earnest, saying: He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place. But Pilate hearing Galilee, asked if the man were of Galilee? And when he understood that he was of Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him away to Herod, who himself was also at Jerusalem in those days. And Herod seeing Jesus was very glad, for he was desirous of a long time to see him, because he had heard many things of him: and he hoped to see some sign wrought by him. And he questioned him with many words. But he answered him nothing. And the chief priests and the scribes stood by, earnestly accusing him. And Herod with his army set him at nought, and mocked him, putting on him a white garment, and sent him back to Pilate. And Herod and Pilate were made friends that same day: for before they were enemies one to another. Then Pilate calling together the chief priests, and the magistrates, and the people, said to them: You have brought this man to me as one that perverteth the people, and behold I, having examined him before you, find no cause in this man touching those things wherein you accuse him. No, nor Herod neither. For I sent you to him, and behold nothing worthy of death is done to him. I will chastise him, therefore, and release him. Now of necessity he was to release unto them one upon the feast day. But the whole multitude together cried out at once, saying: Away with this man, and release unto **us** Barabbas, who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for a murder, was cast into prison. And Pilate again spoke to them, desiring to release Jesus. But they cried out again, saying: Crucify him, crucify him. And he said to them the third time: Why, what evil hath



this man done? I find no cause of death in him. I will chastise him therefore, and let him go. But they were instant with loud voices requiring that he might be crucified; and their voices prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. And he released unto them him who for murder and sedition had been cast into prison, whom they had desired: but Jesus he delivered up to their will. And as they led him away, they laid hold of one Simon of Cyrene, coming from the country; and they laid the cross on him to carry after Jesus. And there followed him a great multitude of people and of women, who bewailed, and lamented him. But Jesus turning to them, said: Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For behold the days shall come, wherein they will say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that have not borne, and the paps that have not given suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains: Fall upon us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if in the green wood they do these things, what shall be done in the dry? And there were also two other malefactors led with him, to be put to death. And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, they crucified him there; and the robbers, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. And Jesus said: Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. But they dividing his garments cast lots. And the people stood beholding, and the rulers with them derided him, saying: He saved others, let him save himself, if he be Christ, the elect of God. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, and saying: If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. And there was also a superscription written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin and Hebrew: This is the King of the Jews. And one of those robbers who



were hanged, blasphemed him, saying: If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering, rebuked him, saying: neither dost thou fear God, seeing thou art under the same condemnation. And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done no evil. And he said to Jesus: Lord, remember me when thou shalt come into thy kingdom. And Jesus said to him: Amen, I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with me in paradise. And it was almost the sixth hour; and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened; and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. And Jesus crying out with a loud voice, said: Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. And saying this, he gave up the ghost. (Here all kneel and pause.) Now the centurion seeing what was done, glorified God, saying: Indeed this was a just man. And all the multitude of them that were come together to that sight, and saw the things that were done, returned striking their breast. And all his acquaintance, and the women that had followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things. And behold there was a man named Joseph, who was a counsellor, a good and a just man, (the same had not consented to their counsel and doings,) of Arimathea, a city of Judea, who also himself looked for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus. And taking him down he wrapped him in fine linen, and laid him in a sepulchre that was hewed in stone, wherein never yet any man had been laid.

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## INSTRUCTION ON HOLY THURSDAY.

*What festival does the Church celebrate to-day?*

**T**HE Catholic Church commemorates to-day the institution, by our Saviour, of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. This commemoration she has celebrated from the first ages of Christianity.

*What remarkable things did Christ perform on this day?*

He ate with His apostles the Paschal lamb which was a type of Himself; it was eaten with bitter herbs and unleavened bread; they ate it standing with clothes girded, and staff in hand, in remembrance of the hurried escape of the Jews from Egypt. (*Exod. xii.*) After having eaten the Paschal lamb our Lord with profound humility washed the feet of His apostles, exhorting them to practise the same humility and charity; afterwards, He gave them His Flesh and Blood under the appearance of bread and wine, for spiritual food and drink, thus instituting the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, the Sacrifice of the Mass, and the priesthood; for when He said to the apostles: Do this in commemoration of me, he ordained them priests. After this He held His last discourse in which He particularly recommended brotherly love; said that beautiful, high-priestly prayer, in which He implored His Heavenly Father particularly for the unity of His Church. He then went as usual to Mount Olivet, where He commenced His passion with prayer and resignation to the will of His Father, suffering intense, deathlike agony, which was so great that He sweat blood. Here Judas betrayed Him into the hands of the Jews, by a treacherous kiss. They bound Him and led Him to the high-priests, Annas and Caiphas, where He was sentenced to death by the council, and denied by Peter.

The Introit of the Mass reads thus: We ought to glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ: in whom is our salvation, life, and resurrection: by whom we have been saved and delivered. (*Gal. vi. 14.*) May God have mercy on us, and bless us: may He cause the light of His countenance to shine upon us, and **may He have mercy on us.** (*Ps. lxvi. 2.*)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. [*See Good Friday.*]



*What ceremonies are observed in this day's Mass?*

The crucifix is covered with a white veil in memory of the sacred institution of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. The priest comes to the altar robed in white vestments; the Gloria in excelsis is solemnly sung, accompanied by the ringing of bells, and all Christians are exhorted to render praise and gratitude to the Lord for having instituted the Blessed Feast of Love; after the Gloria the bells are silent until Holy Saturday to indicate the Church's mourning for the passion and death of Jesus; to urge us also to spend these days in silent sorrow, meditating on the sufferings of Christ, and in memory of the shameful flight of the apostles at the capture of their master, and their silence during these days. At the Mass the priest consecrates two hosts one of which He consumes at the Communion, and the other he preserves in the chalice for the following day, because no consecration takes place on Good Friday. The officiating priest does not give the usual kiss of peace before Communion, because on this day Judas betrayed his master with a kiss. After Mass, the consecrated host in the chalice, and the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle, are taken in procession to the sacristy or repository, in memory of the earliest times of Christianity, when the consecrated hosts for the communicants and the sick, were kept in a place especially prepared, because there was no tabernacle on the altar. Moreover it also signifies Christ's going to Mount Olivet, where His Godhead was concealed. After the procession the priests with the choir say vespers in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

EPISTLE. (i Cor. xi. 20—32.) BRETHREN, When you come together into one place, it is not now to eat the Lord's supper. For every one taketh before his supper to eat. And one indeed is hungry, and another is drunk. What! have you not houses to eat and drink in? Or despise ye the Church of God? and put them to shame that have not? What shall I say to you? Do I praise you? In this I praise you not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke it, and said: Take ye, and eat: this is my body, which shall be delivered for you:



this do for the commemoration of me. In like manner, also, the Chalice, after he had supped, saying: This Chalice is the New Testament in my blood. This do ye, as often as you shall drink it, for the commemoration of me. For as often as you shall eat this bread, and drink this chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord, until he come. Wherefore, whoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord. Therefore are there many infirm and weak among you, and many sleep. But if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But whilst we are judged, we are chastised by the Lord, that we be not condemned with this world.

EXPLANATION. The early Christians were accustomed, after the celebration of the Lord's Supper, to unite in a common repast; those who were able furnished the food, and rich and poor partook of it in common, in token of brotherly love. This repast they called "Agape," "meal of love." At Corinth this custom was abused, some ate before Communion that which had been brought, became intoxicated, and deprived the poor of their share. The Apostle condemns this abuse, declaring it an unworthy preparation for Communion, and reminds the Corinthians of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament telling them what a terrible sin it is to partake of the body and blood of the Lord unworthily, for whoever does this makes himself guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, and eats and drinks his own judgment, that is, eternal damnation. — Therefore prove yourself, O Christian soul, as often as you communicate, see whether you have committed any grievous sin which you have not confessed, or for which you were not heartily sorry.

GOSPEL. (*John* xiii. 1—15.) BEFORE the festival day of the Pasch, Jesus knowing that his hour was come, that he should pass out of this world to the





Father: having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. And when supper was done, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray him: knowing that the Father had given him all things into his hands, and that he came from God, and goeth to God: he riseth from supper, and layeth aside his garments: and having taken a towel, he girded himself. After that, he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of the disciples, and to wipe them with the towel, wherewith he was girt. He cometh



therefore to Simon Peter, and Peter saith to him: Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered, and said to him: What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith to him: Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him: If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with me. Simon Peter saith to him: Lord! not only my feet, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him: He that is washed, needeth not but to wash his feet, but is clean wholly.\* And you are clean, but not all. For he knew who he was that would betray him: therefore he said: You are not all clean. Then after he had washed their feet, and taken his garments, being set down again, he said to them: Know you what I have done to you? You call me Master, and Lord: and you say well, for so I am. If then I, being your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you so do you also.

*Why did Jesus wash the feet of His disciples?*

To give them a proof of His sincere love and great humility which they should imitate; to teach them that although free from sin, and not unworthy to receive His most holy body and blood, their feet needed cleansing, that is, that they should be purified from all evil inclinations which defile the heart, and prevent holy Communion from producing fruitful effects in the soul.

*Why is it that on this day in each church only one priest says Mass at which the others receive Communion?*

Because on this day Christ alone offered the unbloody Sacrifice, and having instituted the Blessed Sacrament, fed with His own hands His disciples with His flesh and blood, it is therefore proper that in commemoration of this, the priests in one church should receive the Blessed Sacrament from the hands of one, according to the example of the apostles, but as a sign of the priestly dignity which on this day Christ gave to the apostles and their successors, each priest wears a stole.



*Why are the altars stripped on this day?*

To show that Jesus took off, as it were, at the time of His passion, His divine glory, and yielded Himself up in utter humiliation into the hands of His enemies to be crucified, (*Phil. ii. 6. 7.*) and that at the crucifixion He was forcibly stripped of His garments, which the soldiers divided among them, as foretold in the twenty-first psalm, which is therefore said during this ceremony. — The faithful are urged to put off the old sinful man with his actions, and by humbling themselves become conformable to Christ.

*Why is it that spiritual superiors wash the feet of their subjects, as do also the Catholic princes the feet of twelve poor men?*

To commemorate the washing of the apostles' feet by Christ, and to teach all, even the highest to exercise the necessary virtues of humility and charity towards all, even the lowest, according to the example given by Jesus. Princes and spiritual superiors therefore kiss the feet after washing them, and the pope presses them to his breast, giving to each person a silver and a gold medal on which is pictured the washing of the feet by Christ.

*What is Tenebrae, and what its meaning?*

It is the office which the clergy say on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of this week, accompanied by the lamentations of the Prophet Jeremias, and other ceremonies. The word Tenebrae means darkness, and represents the prayers formerly said in the dark hours of the morning. In the Tenebrae the Church mourns the passion and death of Jesus, and urges her children to return to God; she therefore makes use of those mournful words of Jeremias: "Jerusalem! Jerusalem, be converted to the Lord, thy God!"

*Why is the Tenebrae said in the evening?*

In memory of that time when the early Christians spent the whole night preceding great festivals in prayer, but later, when zeal diminished, it was observed only by the clergy on the eves of such festivals; also in order that we may consider the darkness, lasting for three hours, at the crucifixion of Christ, whence the name Tenebrae; and lastly, to represent by it that mourning, of which darkness is the type.



*Why, during the prayers of the clergy, are the lights in the triangular candlestick extinguished one after another?*

Because the Tenebrae, as has been already remarked, in the earliest times of the Church, were held in the night, the candles were extinguished one after another, as the daylight gradually approached they were no longer necessary; again, at the time of the passion and death of Jesus, His apostles whom He calls the light of the world, one after another gradually left Him; at the death of Christ the earth was covered with darkness. The Jews, blinded by pride, would not recognize Christ as the Saviour of the world, and therefore fell by His death into the deepest darkness of hardened infidelity.

*What is meant by the last candle which is carried lighted behind the altar, and after prayers are finished, is brought back again?*

This candle signifies Christ, who on the third day came forth from the grave, by His own power, as the true light of the world, though according to His human nature He died and lay in the grave until the third day.

*Why is a noise made with clappers at the end of the Tenebrae?*

This was formerly a sign that service was over; it also signifies the earthquake which took place at Christ's death.

*How should we attend the Church service on this day?*

The Church commemorates on this day the institution of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar; we should therefore consider with a lively faith that Jesus, our divine Teacher and Saviour, is really and truly here present; we should adore Him as the Son of God, who became man to redeem us; should admire the love which determined Him to institute the Blessed Sacrament, that He might always be with us; and should thank Him for all the inestimable graces which we derive from this Sacrament.

*REMARK. In the Cathedrals the holy oils which are used in Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Orders, and Extreme Unction, as also in consecrating baptismal fonts and altar stones, are blessed on this day. Let us thank our Lord for the institution of these Sacraments at which blessed oils are used.*

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## INSTRUCTION ON GOOD FRIDAY.

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**T**HIS day was formerly for the Jewish people a day of preparation for Easter, and was called by them the Parasceve; for us Christians it is the anniversary of the death and burial of our Lord who on this day, being Himself both High-Priest and Victim, offered Himself upon the cross for the salvation of the world.

*Why do Catholics hold this day in such veneration?*

Because it is one of the greatest days from the beginning of the world to its end. On this day the designs which God had from all eternity were perfected, as Jesus Himself expressed when He said: All is consummated; for on this day He was given up to the Gentiles by the Jews, was scourged, crowned with thorns, loaded with the cross, dragged to Calvary amid taunts and sneers, there nailed to the cross between two thieves, and by His painful death finished the great work of redemption.

*Why did Christ suffer so much to redeem us?*

To show us what an immense evil sin is, on account of which He underwent such cruel sufferings that He might satisfy divine justice. His love for us was so great that He gave the last drop of His blood to save us. He rendered satisfaction for all men without exception, that none might be lost, that every one might possess eternal life. Look up to-day, and every day of thy life, to Christ on the cross, and see how God punishes sin, since He did not even spare His only-begotten Son, who took upon Himself our sins, and for them died this cruel death. What death is due to thee, if thou dost not despise and flee from sin?

*Why does the Church celebrate the commemoration of the passion of Christ in such solemn quietness?*

That we may be induced to thank the Saviour for our redemption, and to move us to sincere love for Him by serious meditation on His passion. For this reason St. Paul ordered the observance of this day, and the Christians even in his time sanctified it by deep mourning, and rigorous fasting.



*Why do we not observe Good Friday with such festivities as do the Protestants? [in Europe.]*

Because our grief for our Saviour's death is too great to permit us to celebrate it joyously, even nature mourned His death; the sun was darkened, the earth trembled and the rocks were rent. Although the Christian rejoices on this day in the grace of redemption through Christ, he is aware that his joy cannot be pleasing to God unless he endeavors to participate in the merits of the passion and death of Christ by sorrow for his sins, by amendment and penance; and this is the very reason why the Church solemnizes this day in a sad and touching manner.

*Why are there no candles lighted at the beginning of the service?*

To signify that on this day Christ, the Light of the world, became, as it were, extinguished.

*Why does the priest prostrate himself before the altar at the beginning of the service?*

That with him we should consider in deepest sorrow and humility how the Saviour died on the cross for our sins, and how unworthy we are on account of them to lift up our faces.

*Why does the service commence with the reading of two lessons?*

Because Christ died for Jews and Gentiles. The first lesson is from the Prophet Osee, (*Osee vi. 1—6.*) and the other from Exodus, (*Exod. xii. 1—11.*) from them we infer that by the bloody death of the immaculate Lamb Jesus we are healed of our sins, and redeemed from death.

*After the first lesson the priest says the following:*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God! from whom Judas received the punishment of his sin, and the thief the reward of his confession: grant us the effects of Thy mercy; that as our Lord Jesus Christ at the time of His passion bestowed on each a different recompense of his merits, so having destroyed the old man in us, He may give us the grace of His Resurrection. Who liveth, &c.

*REMARK. After the Passion the priest prays in behalf of the one, only true Church, that she may increase, and*



*that peace and unity may always remain with her; for the pope, that his government may be blessed; for the bishops, priests, the clergy, and the people, that they may serve God in justice; for those converted to the faith, that they may continue to grow in knowledge and in zeal for the holy religion; for rulers as defenders of the Church, that they may govern with wisdom and justice, and that those under them may be loyal to them with fidelity and obedience; for the unfortunate, that God may have mercy on them; for heretics and apostates, that they may be brought back from error to the truth of the Catholic faith; for the Jews, that they may be enlightened; for the heathens, that they may be converted. Before each prayer the priest says Oremus, (Let us pray) Flectamus genua, (Let us kneel); when kneeling, we say Amen, and at the call Levate (Rise up) we rise: except at the prayer for the Jews, when the genuflection is omitted, because the Jews bent the knee in mockery before our Lord. As Christ on this day prayed for all men, the Church desires, that we do the same; say, therefore, the following:*

PRAYER. O Lord Jesus! who on the cross, while enduring the most excruciating pain, didst pray with a loud voice for all men, we humbly pray Thee for Thy vicar, Pope N., for our bishop N., for all the priests and clergy, for our civil government, for the neophytes, for the unfortunate and oppressed, for all Catholics, that Thou mayst preserve them in the true faith, and strengthen them, that they may serve Thee according to their different vocations. We pray Thee also for all unbelievers, and those separated from the true fold, for the Jews, and for the heathens, that Thou mayst unite all in Thy holy Church, and bring them to eternal salvation. Amen.

*What is done by the priest after these prayers?*

The priest then goes down from the epistle side of the altar, takes the veiled crucifix, and extending it towards the people, uncovers it so much that the head is seen, and sings in a low voice: Ecce lignum crucis, &c.: Behold the wood of the cross on which the Salvation of the world was hanged! The choir answers: Venite, adoremus: Come, let us adore! at which all kneel, adoring Christ who died on the cross for us. The priest then advances to the



corner of the altar, uncovers the right arm of the Crucifix, and sings in a higher tone: *Ecce lignum crucis, &c.*; to which the choir responds as before. Then at the middle of the altar he uncovers the entire Crucifix, and elevating it, sings in a still higher tone than before: *Ecce lignum, &c.* The choir responds again: *Venite adoremus.* The image of the crucified Redeemer, which has been hidden from our view since Passion Sunday should make a deep impression upon us; it teaches us at the same time how the Saviour became gradually known to the world. Jesus is adored three times, because He was mocked three times: in the court-yard of the high-priest, in Pilate's house, and on mount Calvary. When the crucifix is unveiled the priest carries it to the place prepared for it, and kneeling he places it on the cushion covered with a white veil to represent the laying of Christ in the sepulchre; he then retires to the gospel side of the Altar where he puts off his shoes, like Moses, when he was about to approach Almighty God; he then kneels and meditates on the passion of Christ; goes a few steps forward, again kneels, and still a third time, this time directly in front of the crucifix. He adores Jesus with humility, considers His infinite love, which brought Him to the cross and laid Him in the sepulchre for our Redemption, and then kisses with reverence the image of the crucified Saviour. During this veneration of the cross the choir chants alternately the versicles called the Reproaches, and between each part of the canticle the following words in Greek and Latin: "Holy God! Holy and strong God! Holy and immortal God! have mercy on us!" In these versicles Christ tenderly and lovingly reproaches the people who crucified Him, which we may also take to ourselves, who have so often crucified Jesus anew by sin. They are therefore called reproaches, words of complaint, and continue during the veneration of the cross by the priest. Afterwards a hymn of praise composed by St. Fortunatus is sung in honor of the victory gained on the cross by our Saviour, which calls upon us also to render praise and thanks to Jesus crucified.

Adore also in deepest humility the Saviour who died on the cross, and is now victoriously enthroned; ask with sincere contrition the forgiveness of your sins, and by a threefold advance, kiss with sincere love His sacred wounds, promising to love all men, even your enemies, and to have pity on all in distress, according to His example.

*What follows the veneration of the cross?*

The sacred Host consecrated on Holy Thursday, and kept in the chalice, is brought by the priest in proces-



sion, from the repository to the high altar, incensed in sign of adoration, and after a few short prayers the priest elevates It with the right hand, breaks It, puts one part in the chalice and communicates, and soon after leaves the altar.

*Is there, then, no Mass said on this day?*

No; for on this day there is no bread and wine consecrated, which is the essential part of the Sacrifice of the Mass.

*Why is no Mass said on this day?*

Because Jesus Christ having this day sacrificed Himself on the altar of the cross in a bloody offering, it is not meet that His death sacrifice should be to-day repeated even in an unbloody manner. Besides this, Mass is a joyous and comforting sacrifice, and is therefore omitted because of our mourning.

*What devotions may be practised to-day?*

Besides adoring Jesus in the holy sepulchre, the stations may be said, meditations made on the sufferings of our Lord. Let the words of St. Augustine touch your heart, when he places the crucified Redeemer before our mind in the following words: "Behold the wounds of Jesus who is hanging on the cross, the blood of the dying, the price of our redemption! His head is bowed to give the kiss of peace; His side is open to love; His arms are extended to embrace us; His whole body sacrificed for our redemption. Let these words be the subject of your meditation that He may be wholly in your heart who is nailed to the cross for you."

## MANNER OF CONTEMPLATING CHRIST'S BITTER PASSION.

*Christ also suffered for us: leaving you an example that you should follow his steps. (i Peter ii. 21.)*

**W**HENCE does it come," writes St. Alphonsus Liguori, "that so many of the faithful look with so much indifference at Christ on the cross? They generally assist during Holy Week at the commemoration of His death without any feeling of gratitude or compassion, as if it were a fable or an event in which they had no interest. Know they not, or believe they not what the gospel relates of Christ's passion? Indeed they know it, and believe



it, but do not think of it. It is impossible that he who believes and meditates, should fail to become burning with love for God who suffers and dies for love of him." But why, we may ask here, are there so many who draw so little benefit even from the contemplation of the passion and death of Jesus? Because they fail to consider and imitate the example which Christ gives in His sufferings.

"The cross of Christ," says St. Augustine, "is not only a bed of death, but a pulpit of instruction." It is not only a bed upon which Christ dies, but the pulpit from which He teaches us what we must do. It should now be our special aim to meditate upon the passion of Christ, and to imitate those virtues which shone forth so preëminently in His passion and death. But many neglect to do this. They usually content themselves with compassion when they see Christ enduring such great pains, but they see not with what love, humility, and meekness He bears them, and so do not endeavor to imitate His example. That you, O Christian soul, may avoid this mistake, and that you may draw the greatest possible benefit for your soul, from the contemplation of the passion and death of Christ, attend to that which is said of it by that pious servant of God, Alphonse Rodriguez:

We must endeavor to derive from the meditation on the mysteries of the passion and death of Christ this effect, that we may imitate His virtues, and this by slowly and attentively considering each virtue by itself, exercising ourselves in forming a very great desire for it in our hearts, making a firm resolution to practice it in words and works, and also to conceive a holy aversion and horror of the opposite vice; for instance, when contemplating Christ's condemnation to the death of the cross by Pilate, consider the humility of Jesus Christ, who being God, as humble as He was innocent, voluntarily submitted and silently accepted the unjust sentence and the ignominious death. Here you see from the example given by Jesus, how you should despise yourself, patiently bear all evil, unjust judgment, and detraction, and even seek them with joy as giving you occasion to resemble Him. To produce these necessary effects and resolutions, you should at each mystery contemplate the following particulars:

First, Who is it that suffers? The most innocent, the holiest, the most loving, the only-begotten Son of the Almighty Father, the Lord of heaven and earth. Secondly, What pains and torments, exterior and interior, does He



suffer? Thirdly, In what manner does He suffer, with what patience, humility, meekness and love, does He bear all ignominy and outrage? Fourthly, For whom does He suffer? For all men, for His enemies and His executioners. Fifthly, By whom does He suffer? By Jews and heathens, by soldiers and tyrants, by the devil and all impious children of the world to the end of time, and all who were then united in spirit with His enemies. Sixthly, Why does He suffer? To make reparation for all the sins of the whole world, to satisfy the justice of God, to reconcile the Heavenly Father, to open heaven, to give us His infinite merits that we may from them have strength to follow the way to heaven. At the consideration of each of these points, and indeed at each mystery of the passion of Christ, the imitation of the example of His virtues is the main object, because the true life of the Christian consists in the imitation of Jesus. In considering each stage of the passion of Christ place vividly before your mind the virtue which He practiced therein; contemplate it and ask yourself whether you possess this virtue, or whether you still cherish the opposite vice. If you find the latter to be the case make an act of contrition, with the firm resolution to extirpate this vice, and excite in yourself a sincere desire for the opposite virtue. In this way you will draw the greatest advantage from the contemplation of Christ's passion, and will resemble Christ, and, as the pious Louis of Granada says, there can be no greater honor and adornment for a Christian than to resemble his divine Master, not in the way that Lucifer desired, but in that which He pointed out, when He said: "I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so do you also."

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## THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,

ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN. (CHAPS. XVIII., XIX.)

AT THAT TIME, Jesus went forth with his disciples, over the brook of Cedron, where there was a garden into which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas also, who betrayed him, knew the place: because Jesus had often resorted thither together with his disciples. Judas therefore having received a band of men and servants from the chief priests and the Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.



Jesus, therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth and said to them: Whom seek ye? They answered him: Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith to them: I am he. And Judas also, who betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said to them: I am he; they went backward, and fell to the ground.

Again therefore he asked them: Whom seek ye? And they said: Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered: I have told you, that I am he. If therefore you seek me, let these go away. That the word might be fulfilled which he had said: Of them whom thou hast given me, I have not lost any one. Then Simon Peter having a sword, drew it, and struck the servant of the high-priest, and cut off his right ear. And the name of the servant was Malchus. Then Jesus said to Peter: Put up thy sword into the scabbard. The cup which my Father hath given me, shall not I drink it?

Then the band, and the tribune, and the servants of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him: and they led him away to Annas first: for he was father-in-law to Caiphas, who was the high-priest of that year. Now Caiphas was he who had given the council to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. And that disciple was known to the high-priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high-priest. But Peter stood at the door without. Then the other disciple who was known to the high-priest, went out, and spoke to her that kept the door: and brought in Peter. And the maid that waited at the door, saith to Peter: Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith: I am not.

Now the servants and officers stood at a fire of coals, because it was cold, and warmed themselves:





and with them was Peter also standing, and warming himself.

The high-priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. Jesus answered him: I have spoken openly to the world: I have always taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither all the Jews resort: and in secret I have spoken nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them who have heard what I have spoken to them: behold they know what things I have said.



And when he had said these things, one of the officers standing by, gave Jesus a blow, saying: Answerest thou the high-priest so? Jesus answered him: If I have spoken evil, give testimony of the evil: but if well, why strikest thou me?

And Annas sent him bound to Caiphas the high-priest.

And Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They said therefore to him: Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it and said: I am not. One of the servants of the high-priest, a kinsman to him whose ear Peter cut off, saith to him: Did not I see thee in the garden with him? Then Peter again denied, and immediately the cock crowed. Then they led Jesus from Caiphas to the governor's hall. And it was morning: and they went not into the hall, that they might not be defiled, but that they might eat the passover.

Pilate therefore went out to them, and said: What accusation bring you against this man? They answered and said to him: If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up to thee. Pilate then said to them: Take him you, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said to him: It is not lawful for us to put any man to death. That the word of Jesus might be fulfilled which he said, signifying what death he should die. Pilate therefore went into the hall again, and called Jesus, and said to him: Art thou the king of the Jews? Jesus answered: Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or have others told it thee of me. Pilate answered: Am I a Jew? Thy own nation, and the chief priests, have delivered thee up to me. What hast thou done? Jesus answered: My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would certainly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now my kingdom is not from hence. Pilate





therefore said to him: Art thou a king then? Jesus answered: Thou sayest that I am a king. For this was I born, and for this came I into the world, that I should give testimony to the truth: every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice.

Pilate saith to him: What is truth?

And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and saith to them: I find no cause in him. But you have a custom that I should release one unto you at the passover: will you therefore that I release unto you the king of the Jews? Then cried



they all again, saying: Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

Then, therefore, Pilate took Jesus, and scourged him. And the soldiers plaiting a crown of thorns, put it upon his head: and they put on him a purple garment, and they came to him, and said: Hail, King of the Jews! And they gave him blows. Pilate, therefore, went forth again, and saith to them: Behold I bring him forth to you that you may know that I find no cause in him. So Jesus came forth bearing the crown of thorns, and the purple garment. And he saith to them: Behold the man. When the chief priests, therefore, and the officers had seen him, they cried out, saying: Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith to them: Take him you, and crucify him; for I find no cause in him. The Jews answered him: We have a law; and according to the law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. When Pilate therefore had heard this saying, he feared the more. And he entered into the hall again, and he said to Jesus: Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him: Speakest thou not to me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and I have power to release thee? Jesus answered: Thou shouldst not have any power against me, unless it were given thee from above. Therefore he that hath delivered me to thee, hath the greater sin. And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him. But the Jews cried out, saying: If thou release this man, thou art not Cæsar's friend. For whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar.

Now when Pilate had heard these words, he brought Jesus forth: and sat down in the judgment-seat, in the place that is called the Pavement, and in Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the parasceve of the passover, about the sixth hour, and he saith to the Jews: Be-



hold your king. But they cried out: Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith to them: Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered: We have no king but Cæsar. Then therefore, he delivered him to them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him forth. And bearing his own cross he went forth to that place which is called Calvary, but in Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified him, and with him two others, one on each side, and Jesus in the midst. And Pilate wrote a title also, and he put it upon the cross. And the writing was: Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews.

The title, therefore, many of the Jews did read, because the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, in Greek, and in Latin. Then the chief-priest of the Jews said to Pilate: Write not, the king of the Jews: but that he said: I am the king of the Jews. Pilate answered: What I have written, I have written. Then the soldiers, when they had crucified him, took his garments (and they made four parts, to every soldier a part) and also his coat. Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.

They said then one to another: Let us not cut it, but let us cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the Scripture might be fulfilled which saith: They have parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture they have cast lots. And the soldiers did indeed these things. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing, whom he loved, he saith to his mother: Woman! behold thy son. After that, he saith to the disciple: Behold thy mother. And from that hour the disciple took her to his own. Afterwards,





Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said: I thirst. Now there was a vessel set there full of vinegar. And they put a sponge full of vinegar, about hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus, therefore, had taken the vinegar, he said: It is consummated. And bowing his head, he gave up the ghost.

Then the Jews (because it was the parasceve) that the bodies might not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath-day (for that was a great Sabbath-day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and



that they might be taken away. The soldiers, therefore, came: and they broke the legs of the first, and of the other that was crucified with him.

But after they were come to Jesus, when they saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers opened his side with a spear, and immediately there came out blood and water. And he that saw it gave testimony, and his testimony is true. And he knoweth that he saith true, that you also may believe.

For these things were done that the Scripture might be fulfilled: You shall not break a bone of him. And again another Scripture saith: They shall look on him whom they pierced.

And after these things, Joseph of Arimathea (because he was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews), besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus. And Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore and took away the body of Jesus. And Nicodemus also came, he who at the first came to Jesus by night, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pound weight.

They took therefore the body of Jesus, and wrapped it in linen cloths with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein no man yet had been laid. Therefore, because of the parasceve of the Jews, they laid Jesus there; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

### THE PEOPLE AT THE CROSS, AND THE PEOPLE OF TO-DAY.

**A**T Golgotha, in sight of the temple and city of Jerusalem, in the presence of two or three millions of Jews, who had come to the city from all lands, Jesus, the Son of God, hung upon the cross, an expiatory sacrifice for mankind burdened with all manner of sin. Near the



cross of her dying Son stood Mary, His mother, filled with grief; by her side John, the beloved disciple, and kneeling at the foot of the cross almost insensible from sorrow and anguish, convulsively winding her arms around the wood of the cross, was Mary Magdalen, the penitent. On a cross at the right hand hung a penitent thief turned towards the Saviour; at the left hand on another cross groaned another criminal of impenitent heart, blaspheming the Holy One of Israel. Around the agonizing Saviour stood the Scribes and Pharisees, that hypocritical class of practiced miscreants, who hated and persecuted the innocent Lamb Jesus, even in death, who blind to all the predictions of the prophets whose books they had read, blind to the actual miracles which Jesus had wrought before their eyes to prove His divinity and His mission, filled with envy and hatred, reviled the dying Redeemer. At a distance stood a crowd of curious, indifferent people, who had come to Jerusalem to attend the feast of the Passover, and having heard of Jesus were present at His crucifixion. Not far from them the rough soldiers and executioners lay around, dividing among themselves the Saviour's clothes and casting lots for His seamless garment.

This was the society that surrounded the Son of God and Redeemer of the world bleeding on the cross, and in their different phases they are types of the men of to-day.

Only few were there who clung to the Saviour in unwavering faith and true love, ready to die with Him, and for Him. There were few who suffered all taunts and sneers, all revilings and blasphemies, and departed not from the cross. Of these three were especially faithful, viz. Mary, John, and Magdalen. Those who like Mary and John are pure and innocent, or like Magdalen are weeping for their sins, who confess Jesus with their heart and lips, cling faithfully to Him, and permit neither persecution nor death to separate them from Him, are like the faithful three at the cross. As then by the cross, so to-day, the number of the faithful is small, and great is the number of those who, like the careless spectators of the crucifixion, are not decided enemies of Jesus crucified, nor yet His firm friends. They have indeed been baptized in the name of Jesus, they remain externally with the Catholic Church, which Christ founded, but they are sunk in lukewarmness, have no living faith, and are wavering to and fro like a reed between the world and Jesus. They fear the sneers of the so-called learned and enlightened, many of whom are well represented by the Scribes and Pharisees, who, having no faith in Christ themselves, bear in their hearts only hatred and contempt for His Church; they shun the cross, because it



is too heavy for their sensuality; they do not, it is true, commit public crimes, they prize highly a good name, occasionally observe the law of the Church, but are accessible to every error; their ears incline to every blasphemy against the religion of Jesus and His ministers, the priests. Instead of standing fearlessly and boldly for Christ, for the holy faith He has taught, and which the Church teaches, they turn away, are silent, even go with the Church's enemies that they may not be sneered at. They are neither hot, nor cold, so that the words of the Scriptures are verified in them: Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold, nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth. (*Apoc.* iii. 16.) The Lord casts away from Him these lukewarm, indifferent Christians, as nauseous saliva, and leaves them to their destruction. The true Pharisees of our day are those who purposely close their eyes to the light of truth, who have put aside faith in Jesus, and are no longer disposed to receive instruction. Their pride, their egotism has blinded them, with their poor reason they wish to understand the mysteries of the Almighty, with their weak intellect to fathom His ways, even seek to be equal to God; they deny every revealed truth, they deny the existence of heaven and hell, they propose to live like the animals, without God, — but their end is ruin! Few of them, having seen their error, as the thief on the cross at the right hand of Jesus, turn repentingly to the Redeemer; obdurate as the robber and murderer at His left, the Pharisees of our day cease not to blaspheme the Crucified, and to revile His holy Church. These are assisted by the apostates and unbelievers, who, like the soldiers and executioners, divide among themselves His clothes, and cast lots for His seamless garment. Those clothes which the soldiers divided among themselves, are the truths which the apostates and heretics yet retain after their apostacy from the Church. They have divided these truths, for they have separated themselves into thousands of sects, and possess only portions of the one truth, which Jesus has laid down in His Church, whole and complete. "Upon my vesture they have cast lots."

This seamless vesture of Christ is His holy Church that cannot be separated or divided, she is one, and must remain one to the end of time. Concerning this one true Church, the sects all quarrel, all want to be the true Church without considering that, as but one soldier, by the lots, received Christ's seamless garment, so only one association of men can be the true Church, and that is the association which Christ has chosen.



Thus we find at the cross on Golgotha the different classes of people of our day represented, namely, the pure and innocent; the repenting sinners, firm adherents of Jesus and His teachings; as also the lukewarm, wavering, nominal Christians; obdurate heretics, professed infidels and apostates. So to-day mankind is divided into like parties.

To which party do you belong, O Christian soul? To which do you wish to belong? Choose! The time of the division is near. The Lord already holds in His hand the winnowing shovel to clear His floor. If you are not a firm adherent of Jesus and His Church, in the storm that is gathering you will be blown like chaff. If you remain with the small group at the cross, in persevering courage, you will stand firm, and on the day when the cross shall appear in the clouds of heaven, you, with Mary, the mother of the faithful, with John and with Magdalen, will triumph forever, as a victorious knight of the cross. Decide!

## INSTRUCTION ON HOLY SATURDAY.



*Why is this day called Holy Saturday?*

BECAUSE on this day Jesus, the Holy of holies, rested in the sepulchre, and because the Church to-day blesses the new fire, the Easter candle, and the baptismal water.

*Why is fire struck anew, blessed, and the lamps and candles in the Church lighted from it?*

In ancient times it was customary to strike a new fire every day, bless it, and light the candles from it, and later this was done every Saturday; in the eleventh century this ceremony was restricted to Holy Saturday. The fire is struck from a stone to indicate, that Christ is the light of the world, and the Stone which the Jews rejected has now become the Corner stone of His Church; (*Ps. cxvii. 22.*) that the divine Son, the light of the world, was apparently extinguished at His death, but at His resurrection shone anew; that all those who witness this ceremony to-day be spiritually enlightened hereafter. This fire is blessed, because the Church blesses every thing that is used for divine service, and because the light and fire represent Christ, who brought the fire of love upon earth with which to enkindle our hearts. (*Luke xii. 49.*)



*What is represented by the triple candle?*

The triple candle represents the most Holy Trinity of which the second Divine Person came down upon the earth as the true light. For this reason the priest (or deacon) sings at the lighting of each candle: *Lumen Christi*, Light of Christ, and kneeling three times humbly adores the Triune Deity, and especially Christ the true, divine Light. The chanter responds *Deo gratias*, Thanks be to God.

*What does the Easter candle signify?*

It is an emblem of Christ who has risen from death. Christ the true Light leads us from the bondage of Satan into the freedom of the children of God as the pillar of fire led the children of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt. The five holes in the candle represent the five wounds of Jesus by which mankind was healed, (i *Pet.* ii. 24,) and the five grains of frankincense signify the spices with which the body of our Lord was embalmed.

*Why are all the candles and lamps lighted from the triple candle?*

To show that Christ was begotten by the Father of Light from all eternity, and is therefore true God from true God, true Light from true Light, from whom enlightenment is diffused over all men. (ii *Cor.* iv, 6.)

*To what do the twelve prophecies refer which are read before the blessing of the baptismal font?*

They have reference to Christ in whom the predictions contained therein were verified. The number corresponds to the twelve apostles, who announced their fulfillment to the world.

*Why is the baptismal water blessed with so many ceremonies, and what is its signification?*

The baptismal water is blessed with so many ceremonies that the different effects of baptism may be shown, and that this holy Sacrament may be administered and received with more reverence and devotion; it signifies the blood of Christ by which our souls are purified.

*What is the meaning of these ceremonies?*

The priest with his hand parts the water in the form of the cross, to illustrate that God gives to it the virtue of regenerating all those born in original sin, making



them children of God through Christ who died on the cross. He touches the surface of the water with the palm of his hand, to show that the Holy Ghost is over this water as at the creation, and bestows many graces on those who are baptized. He blesses it, signing it three times with the sign of the cross, because the water receives its sin-cleansing power only through the sufferings and the merits of Christ, from the Father, by the coöperation of the Holy Ghost. The baptismal water is thrown by the priest towards the four parts of the earth, because the grace of baptism should reach all nations. The priest breathes on the water three times in the form of a cross, as the Creator breathed into man the breath of life; Christ breathed upon the apostles the divine Spirit who by His grace and power revives and sanctifies those who are baptized. The Easter candle, (emblem of Christ, risen from the dead) is dipped three times into the water each time deeper, to show that the baptized should become more and more enlightened through the light of Christ's doctrine, more and more penetrated by its divinity, more and more purified from sin. The people are sprinkled with this water to remind all those present who have received sanctification in baptism, and have lost it by sin, that they should strive to regain it by true repentance. Finally, oil and chrism are mixed with the water as a sign that the grace of the Holy Ghost of which these are figures, is given through the water to those who receive this Sacrament; and also, that the baptized should, after baptism, devote themselves to the service of Christ, the Anointed One, and unite themselves in love to Him.

*Why is the baptismal water blessed only on this day and on the Saturday before Pentecost?*

Because in early times converts were baptized only on these days; and because the risen Saviour is the example of a soul sanctified by the Holy Ghost in baptism.

*How should we assist at the blessing of the baptismal water?*

With sentiments of sincere gratitude for the grace of baptism; with the firm resolution of preserving our baptismal innocence, or if we have lost it, of gaining it by penance. We should renew our baptismal vows especially on this day by saying the apostle's creed, making acts of faith, hope, love, and contrition; and renounce anew the devil, all his pride, and all his suggestions.



*Why does the priest prostrate himself after blessing the baptismal water, and rise again after the litany of the saints has been chanted?*

To most humbly ask God, by the intercession of the saints, that He would give to all men the grace of baptism, that as all men have been dead and buried in sin, so they may rise with Christ as new creatures to grace and eternal life.

*Why are the altars decorated on this day?*

Because the Church, the beloved bride of Christ, desires to announce in advance to her children the glad tidings, that the Lord has risen from the dead; she decorates herself therefore, and causes the bells to peal and joyous hymns to resound. It also has reference to the glorious, incorruptible body with which Christ adorned Himself at His Resurrection.

*Why is there no Introit in this day's Mass?*

The Introit of the Mass was formerly an entire psalm which was sung while the people were assembling in church; but as in early times the people on Easter were already assembled to assist at the ceremonies, no Introit was sung at the Mass. The Church observes the same practice, although she abolished the night vigils on account of the abuses to which they gave rise.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who makest this most sacred night illustrious by the glory of the Resurrection of our Lord, preserve in the new offspring of Thy family the spirit of adoption, which Thou hast given them; that being renewed in body and soul, they may serve Thee with purity of heart. Thro' the same &c.

EPISTLE. (*Coloss. iii. 1—4.*) BRETHREN: If you be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God: mind the things that are above, not the things that are on the earth. For you are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ shall appear, who is your life, then shall you appear with him in glory.

*After the epistle the priest sings three times: Alleluia! as a joyful exclamation over the Redeemer's triumphant victory.*





**EXPLANATION.** St. Paul places Christ's resurrection before us as the example and motive of the spiritual resurrection from sin, which should be effected in us by the holy Sacraments at Easter. — With Christ we should die to the world, and live hidden in Him, if we desire to rise at the Last Day with Him in glory, and be acknowledged before all men by Him as His own.

**GOSPEL.** (*Matt.* xxviii. 1—7.) In the end of the Sabbath, when it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalen, and the other Mary, to view the sepulchre. And behold there was a great earthquake. For an angel of the Lord de-



scended from heaven: and coming, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. And his countenance was as lightning, and his raiment as snow. And for fear of him, the guards were struck with terror, and became as dead men. And the angel answering, said to the women: Fear not you: for I know that you seek Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, for he is risen, as he said. Come, and see the place where the Lord was laid. And going quickly, tell ye his disciples that he is risen: and behold, he will go before you into Galilee; there you shall see him. Lo, I have foretold it to you.

*What are we to learn from this gospel?*

That we, too, will receive the plenitude of divine grace and heavenly blessings, if like these pious women we seek Christ early, that is, by making a good intention before we begin our work.

*Why is there no Credo or Agnus Dei said, nor the kiss of peace given, and why are short vespers said after communion?*

Formerly, the Credo or confession of faith was said by the newly baptized, the Agnus Dei was sung in the litany of the saints, and these are therefore omitted in the Mass. The kiss of peace is not given, because Christ had not yet said to His disciples, Peace be with you. Short vespers are said after the priest's communion, because this day is a type of the eternal Sabbath in heaven which has no vespers, that is, evening.

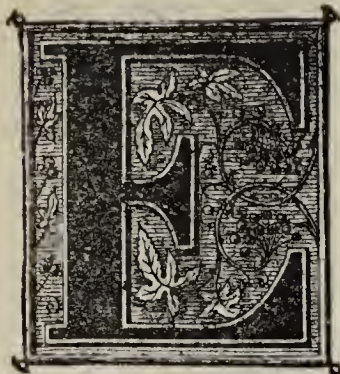
Do not omit on this day to thank our Lord for the many graces He has given us through His passion and death. If in the evening the solemn ceremonies of the resurrection are held, assist at them and there make the repeated resolution to rise from the sleep of sin and begin a new life with Christ.

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## INSTRUCTION ON EASTER.

*What is the festival of Easter?*



ASTER, in Latin Pascha, signifies passing over, and has the following historical origin: Under Pharaoh, King of Egypt, the Jews in that country groaned under intolerable bondage. God had mercy on His people, and the hour of deliverance came. By His command the first-born of all the Egyptians was killed by an angel. The Jews had been ordered by God to be ready for emigration, but first to kill a lamb, eat it in their houses in common, and sprinkle the doorposts with its blood. And the angel of death, by order of God, passed the doors sprinkled with the blood of the lamb, and did no harm to any child of the Israelites, whilst he slew all the first-born sons of the Egyptians. In grateful memory of this passing their doors, the Jews observed the festival of Easter, the Pasch, or Passover. After the death of Jesus, the apostles introduced the same festival into the Church in grateful remembrance of the day on which Jesus, the true Easter Lamb, took away our sins by His blood, freed us from the angel of eternal death, and passed us over to the freedom of the children of God.

*Where, during this time, was Christ's holy soul?*

In Limbo, that is, the place where the souls of the just who died before Christ, and were yet in original sin, were awaiting their redemption.

*What have we to expect from the resurrection of Christ?*

That our bodies will rise again from death. (Rom. viii. 11.) For if Christ our head is alive, then we His members must also become reanimated, because a living head cannot exist without living members.

*What is meant by the Alleluia sung in Easter time?*

In English Alleluia means Praise the Lord, and expresses the joy of the Church at the Resurrection of Christ, and the hope of eternal happiness which He has obtained for us.

*Why does the Church on this day bless eggs, bread, and meat?*

To remind the faithful that although the time of fasting is now ended, they should not indulge in gluttony, but



thank God, and use their food simply for the necessary preservation of physical strength.

At the Introit the Church introduces Christ, her Head, as addressing His Heavenly Father in these words: I arose, and am still with thee, alleluia; thou hast laid thy hand upon me, alleluia: thy knowledge is become wonderful, allel., allel. Lord, thou hast proved me and known me: Thou hast known my sitting down and my rising up. (*Ps. cxxxviii.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** O God, who on this day, through Thine only-begotten Son, didst overcome death and open unto us the gate of everlasting life; as by Thy prompting grace Thou dost breathe on the desires of our hearts, so do Thou ever accompany them with Thy help. Through &c.

**EPISTLE.** (*i Cor. v. 7—8.*) BRETHREN, purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new paste, as you are unleavened: for Christ our pasch is sacrificed. Therefore let us feast, not with the old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

**EXPLANATION.** St. Paul here exhorts us that we should at this time remove by a good confession and true penance the leaven, that is, the sins we have committed, and partake of the Paschal lamb in holy Communion with a pure, sincere heart; as the Jews were on this day commanded to eat the Paschal lamb with unleavened bread, abstaining on this day from the old leaven.

During the octave of this festival repeat often with the Church: "Alleluia! Praise to the Lord, for He is good, and His mercy endureth forever. Alleluia! This is the day the Lord has made, Alleluia! Let us rejoice therein, Alleluia! Our Paschal Lamb is Christ who sacrificed Himself for us, Alleluia!"

**GOSPEL.** (*Mark xvi. 1—7.*) AT THAT TIME, Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of James and Salome, bought sweet spices, that, coming, they might anoint Jesus. And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they come to the sepulchre, the sun being





now risen. And they said one to another: Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And looking, they saw the stone rolled back, for it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed with a white robe, and they were astonished. Who saith to them: Be not affrighted; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified: he is risen, he is not here; behold the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples, and Peter, that he goeth before you into Galilee: there you shall see him, as he told you.



*Why did the holy women desire to embalm the body of Jesus with spices?*

Because it was the custom of the Jews to embalm the dead, and as the Sabbath was so near and the time so short that they could not do it before the burial, these pious women procured the spices, and immediately after the Sabbath, hurried in the early morning to the sepulchre, to perform this act of love. We are taught by their conduct, that true love is never indifferent or slow, and what is agreeable to God it does without hesitation.

*Why did the angel send the women to the disciples, and especially to Peter?*

Because the disciples were to announce the Resurrection of Christ to the whole world, and they were now much saddened, and disturbed because of His death. Peter was the head of the apostles, and on account of having three times denied our Lord, he was greatly dejected and faint of heart, and was, therefore, above all to be comforted.

*What encouragement does the Resurrection of Christ give us?*

It encourages us to rise spiritually with Him, and live henceforth a new life, (*Rom. vi. 4.*) which we do if we not only renounce sin, but also flee from all its occasions, lay aside our bad habits, subdue our corrupt inclinations, and aim after virtue and heavenly things.

ASPIRATION. I rejoice, O my Jesus, that Thou hast victoriously risen from death. By Thy triumph over death, hell and the devil, grant us the grace to subdue our evil inclinations, walk in a new life, and die to all earthly things. Amen.

### INSTRUCTION.

**I**T is certainly true that Christ, by His death on the cross and by His resurrection, has rendered perfect satisfaction, and effected man's redemption; (*Heb. ix. 12.*) but we must not imagine that there is no further need of doing penance, or of working out our salvation. For, as the children of Israel, though freed from Pharaoh's bondage, had to fight long and against many enemies in order to gain the Promised Land, so also must we, though freed by Christ from the servitude of the devil, battle against our



enemies to the end of our lives to obtain the promised, heavenly land, for no one is crowned unless he has properly fought. (ii *Tim.* ii. 5.) We must apply the merits of the redemption and satisfaction of Christ to our soul by the frequent reception of the holy sacraments; by imitating His virtues; by patiently bearing our trials and sufferings, and by a penitential life. The pious Angelus Silesius very appropriately writes:

"God is a Lamb that avails you not, my Christian,  
If you become not also a lamb of God.  
The cross on Golgotha redeems not from evil,  
If it is not also erected in thee;  
The dear Christ's death aids you not, my Christian,  
Until in Him and for Him you also have died."

## INSTRUCTION ON EASTER MONDAY.



IN the Introit of this day's Mass, the Church compares the opening of the entrance into heaven which has been effected by the death and Resurrection of Christ, with the entrance of the chosen people of Israel into the Promised Land, which was effected by Josue: The Lord hath brought you into a land flowing with milk and honey, alleluia: let then the law of the Lord be ever in your mouth, alleluia, alleluia. (*Exod.* xiii.) Give glory to the Lord, and call upon his name: publish his works among the Gentiles. (*Ps.* civ.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who by the Paschal solemnity, hast bestowed remedies on the world, continue, we beseech Thee, Thy heavenly blessings on Thy people, that they may deserve to obtain perfect liberty, and advance towards eternal life. Through.

LESSON. (*Acts* x. 37—43.) IN THOSE DAYS, Peter standing up in the midst of the people said: You know the word which hath been published through all Judea: for it began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached, Jesus of Nazareth: how God anointed him with the Holy Ghost, and with power,



who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things that he did in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem; whom they killed, hanging him upon a tree. Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but to witnesses pre-ordained by God: even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose again from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is he who was appointed by God to be judge of the living and of the dead. To him all the Prophets give testimony, that by his name all receive remission of sins, who believe in him.

INSTRUCTION. St. Peter concludes his sermon on the Resurrection with the declaration, that all who believe in Christ will through Him receive forgiveness of their sins. To obtain this remission a faith actuated by love is necessary, which will manifest itself in the exercise of good works. Endeavor to have this faith, if you wish to obtain the forgiveness of sin and eternal happiness, for without good works faith is dead, and forgiveness of sin and eternal salvation are promised only to those who possess an active faith.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xxiv. 13—35.) AT THAT TIME, Two of the disciples of Jesus went the same day to a town which was sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, named Emmaus; and they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that while they talked and reasoned with themselves, Jesus himself also drawing near went with them: but their eyes were held that they should not know him. And he said to them: what are these discourses that you hold one with another as you walk, and are sad? And the one of them, whose name was Cleophas, answering, said to him: Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that have been done there in these days? To whom he said: What





things? And they said: Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet, mighty in work and word before God and all the people: and how our chief priests and princes delivered him to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we hoped that it was he that should have redeemed Israel: and now besides all this to-day is the third day since these things were done. Yea and certain women also of our company, affrighted us, who before it was light, were at the sepulchre, and not finding his body, came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, who say that he is alive.



And some of our people went to the sepulchre: and found it so as the women had said, but him they found not. Then he said to them: O foolish, and slow of heart to believe in all things which the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the scriptures the things that were concerning him. And they drew nigh to the town whither they were going: and he made as though he would go farther. But they constrained him, saying: Stay with us, because it is towards evening, and the day is now far spent. And he went in with them. And it came to pass, whilst he was at table with them, he took bread, and blessed and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him: and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to the other: Was not our heart burning within us, whilst he spoke in the way, and opened to us the scriptures? And rising up the same hour they went back to Jerusalem: and they found the eleven gathered together, and those that were with them, saying: the Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way: and how they knew him in the breaking of bread.

*Why did Christ appear as a stranger to these two disciples?*

Christ conformed Himself to their state of mind; for these disciples, as it appears, did not yet believe that He was God, although He had often declared that He was, and proved it beyond contradiction; they regarded Him as a prophet and doubted His Resurrection. They looked at Him up to this time only with their outward eyes, that is, without faith in His divinity, and therefore the Saviour did not reveal Himself to their soul. It is thus that God generally proceeds towards us. He makes Himself known to us and gives us His graces in proportion to our faith, hope, love, and fidelity.



*Then Christ did not suffer voluntarily, but by compulsion, since He says: Ought not Christ to have suffered?*

Christ gave Himself voluntarily up to death, as said by Isaias; (liii. 7.) but at the same time He was obliged to suffer, that the decree of His Father, and the prophecies might be fulfilled; that our redemption, which required the price of His death upon the cross, might be effected; and that we might learn from His example to enter heaven by suffering.

*How did Christ expound the Scriptures to these disciples?*

It is probable that He showed them how His passion and death were foretold and prefigured in various ways; that He was sold like Joseph, and that His scourging was prefigured by the blood-stained coat of Joseph. He probably drew their attention to the ram which was ensnared in the thornbush, and His crowning with thorns; He carried His cross to Mount Calvary as Isaac, loaded with the wood on which He was to be sacrificed; was deprived of His clothes and derided in His nakedness, as Noah by his son. His crucifixion was prefigured by the serpent Moses set up in the desert. The animals prepared for sacrifice in the Old Testament, and especially the Paschal lamb, were types of Him, who, like them, was killed and sacrificed on the cross, without having His bones broken; finally, Jonas who was three days in the whale and then came forth again, imaged Christ's death, burial and resurrection. He showed them, also, how clearly David and Isaias foretold and described His passion.

*Why did Jesus appear to be going farther?*

To give them an occasion of showing their love for Him a stranger, whom they did not recognize as God; and also to give them an opportunity of practicing a work of charity, for it is pleasing to God that we hospitably invite and entertain strangers. Thus did Abraham and Lot entertain angels in the form of strangers, and saints in the New Testament have done likewise to Christ Himself.

*How did the disciples recognize Him in the breaking of bread?*

Because, as the holy Fathers believe, He gave them then His sacred body as He did to the apostles at the Last Supper, the description of which they had undoubtedly heard.



*What else have we to learn from this gospel?*

That when we have received Christ at Easter in the Blessed Sacrament, we should beg Him to stay with us, for the evening of our life draws near.

PETITION. O Jesus, the evening of our life is drawing nearer and nearer: remain with us by virtue and through the effects of Thy Blessed Sacrament that we, who like the disciples going to Emmaus, are in need of constancy and understanding, may have our faith strengthened by Thy most holy body, become fixed in hope, and so united with Thee in love that nothing can ever again separate us from Thee. Amen.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE TUESDAY AFTER EASTER.



THE Church continues to praise and thank God for the Redemption, and sings at the Introit; He hath given them the water of wisdom to drink, alleluia: this wisdom shall be strengthened in them, and shall not be moved, alleluia: it shall raise them up for ever, alleluia, alleluia. (*Eccl.* xv. 3.) Give glory to the Lord, and call upon his name: declare his deeds among the Gentiles. (*Ps.* civ.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who by a new increase dost continually enlarge Thy Church: grant that Thy servants may manifest in their lives the mystery they have received with faith. Trough &c.

LESSON. (*Acts* xiii. 26—33.) IN THOSE DAYS, Paul standing up, and with his hand bespeaking silence, said: My brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you fear God, to you the word of this salvation is sent. For they that inhabited Jerusalem, and the rulers thereof, not knowing him, nor the voices of the Prophets which are read every



Sabbath, judging him have fulfilled them, and finding no cause of death in him, they desired of Pilate, that they might kill him. And when they had fulfilled all things that were written of him, taking him down from the tree, they laid him in a sepulchre. But God raised him up from the dead the third day: who was seen for many days by them who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem: who to this present are his witnesses to the people. And we declare unto you that the promise which was made to our fathers: this same God hath fulfilled to our children, raising up Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Why do the apostles speak in nearly all their sermons of the Resurrection?*

Because Christ's Resurrection is the foundation of our faith and the anchor of our hope; for, as St. Paul says: If Christ be not risen again, your faith is vain, for you are yet in your sins. (i Cor. xv. 17.) If Christ has not risen, He is not then the Son of God, and our faith is therefore but human; without the resurrection, Christ would not have perfectly conquered death, therefore sin, which is the cause of death, would not have been taken away by Him; but for the Resurrection we could not look for justification and Resurrection to eternal life. Christ, therefore, permitted His apostles and disciples to doubt His Resurrection until, by His frequent appearance among them, they would become convinced of it, and there would thus be no appearance of their having been over credulous, suffering themselves to be deceived.

GOSPEL. (*Luke xxiv. 36—47.*) AT THAT TIME, Jesus stood in the midst of his disciples, and said to them: Peace be to you: it is I, fear not. But they being troubled and frightened, supposed that they saw a spirit. And he said to them: Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? See my hands and feet, that it is I myself: handle, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me to have. And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. But while they yet believed not



and wondered for joy, he said: Have you here anything to eat? And they offered him a piece of a broiled fish, and a honey-comb. And when he had eaten before them, taking the remains he gave to them. And he said to them: These are the words which I spoke to you while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then he opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures; and he said to them: Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day: and that penance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all nations.

*Why did Christ wish peace to His apostles?*

Because peace is one of the greatest blessings; for where peace dwells, there is God also. Peace is a special mark of the children of God, while sinners, on the contrary, know no peace.

*Why did Christ show the marks of His wounds to the apostles?*

To remove from them all doubt of His Resurrection, and to strengthen their faith in Him. Therefore He permitted them to touch Him, and even to eat with Him. We should learn from this that our Resurrection from the death of sin must be accompanied by visible marks, of which Christ's Resurrection should be our model. We must give unmistakable signs of a spiritual life, that is, we must love God and our neighbor, hate sin, and avoid the occasions of evil, subdue our bad habits, and practice good works.

*Why did Christ retain the five wounds even after His Resurrection?*

To show that He had after His Resurrection the same body which received the wounds on the cross; to manifest His exceedingly great love for us, by which He has, so to speak, engravened us on His hands and feet, and in His heart. (*Is. xlix. 16.*) To move us to return love to Him; to encourage us to hope and trust in Him, because His wounds are the most powerful intercessors with the Heavenly Father;



to strengthen us by these wounds in our contest with the world, the flesh, and the devil; to console the oppressed, distressed, and tempted, and to prepare them a place of refuge in their afflictions and temptations; to terrify impenitent sinners to whom He will one day exhibit these wounds, showing how much He has suffered for them, in which by their own fault, they have not participated. — Let us strive, therefore, to live so that these wounds may be our consolation, and not our terror.

ASPIRATION. Grant, O most bountiful Jesus, that the most precious blood which flowed from Thy wounds for me may not be lost

## INSTRUCTION ON THE SCRIPTURES, TRADITION AND THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH.

*What are the holy Scriptures?*

**T**HEY are a collection of books, containing much that has been revealed by God to man at different times from the beginning of the world, and written by various holy writers, not according to human will or understanding, but by inspiration of the Holy Ghost. These books are divided into the Old and the New Testament. The former gives an account of the events from the creation of the world to the coming of Christ. The latter contains what was written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost after the coming of our Saviour.

*Does the holy Bible contain the whole word of God?*

By no means; for in the first place the Scriptures themselves say, that several books are lost, as, for example, the Book of the Wars of the Lord, (*Num.* xxi. 14.) the Book of the Just, (*Jos.* x. 13) the Prophecies of several Prophets, (*ii Paral.* xxxiii. 19.) one Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians. (*i Cor.* v. 9.) With these books were certainly lost revealed truths not contained in the other books. Therefore, according to the testimony of the Bible itself, the whole word of God is not contained therein. Texts from the New Testament also testify to this. Thus, after he had given the necessary directions concerning the celebration of the holy Eucharist, St. Paul says, (*i Cor.* xi. 34.) that he would arrange the rest when he would be at Corinth, but his orders are nowhere written. In several texts



of his Epistles to the Thessalonians (ii *Thess.* ii. 14.) and to Timothy, (i *Tim.* vi. 20., ii *Tim.* i. 13.) he speaks of traditions, of speeches which he made, wholesome words which he preached and are not recorded in writing; finally, he writes to Timothy these memorable words: And the things which thou hast heard from me before many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also; (ii *Tim.* ii. 2.) but where these are written, it is not known. St. John writes at the end of his gospel, that there are also many other things which Jesus did, which were not written; and St. Luke says, (*Acts* i. 3.) that after His Resurrection Jesus spoke to His apostles concerning the kingdom of heaven, but what He said, the saint does not write. The important instructions which Christ, after His Resurrection, gave to His apostles have not been penned. How, then, can the holy Scriptures contain the entire word of God? The apostles had neither the idea, nor the intention of producing a complete collection of the doctrines of Christ; Jesus did not command them to write, but to preach. The gospel had been announced in the three divisions of the earth (*Rom.* x.) and brought forth glorious fruits, before almost a word of it had ever been written. The writings of the New Testament owe their existence to heresies which sprung up, or to doubts which arose, or to other external circumstances, and are therefore only occasional writings, but not a complete collection of the entire teachings of Christ, as the Scriptures themselves acknowledge.

*Where are the doctrines of Christ to be found which are not contained in Scripture?*

They are to be found in hereditary teachings, that is, in oral traditions containing that which Jesus taught, or which the apostles, inspired by the Holy Ghost, did not write, but preached, transmitting their teachings by word of mouth to their successors, as we see from St. Paul's words: What you have heard from me before many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also, and the same thing is clear from the testimony of the earliest Fathers of the Church. Thus St. Ignatius († A. D. 107) enjoins on the faithful the keeping of the apostolic traditions; St. Clement, († A. D. 101) assistant of St. Paul, relates that he was often entreated by the brethren to write down that which he had heard from the priests who succeeded the apostles; St. Basil states: "The doctrines of faith taught in the Church have come to us partly from the writings of the apostles, partly from the sacredness of oral



tradition; they are equally important, and every one is subject to them;" and St. Chrysostom says: "The apostles did not write all; they have left us much by tradition, which deserves the same faith as their writings." (ii *Thess.* 11. 14.) The Church therefore, in reference to her dogmas and moral teachings, appeals to tradition as justly as to the Bible, because Christ commissioned her to teach all nations, all whatsoever He had commanded, and has said that heaven and earth shall pass away, but His word shall not pass away. (*Matt.* xxiv. 35., xxviii. 20.) But since the Scriptures do not contain the entire doctrine of Christ, how could the Church fulfil her commission if that which is missing in the Scriptures was not confided to her by tradition? When the Protestants reject tradition, and take only the Bible for their rule of faith, they are decidedly in error, and even contradict themselves, for they observe various regulations made by the apostles, which are not in the Bible. Thus with the Catholics, they observe the first day of the week, Sunday, baptize infants, teach that the Sacrament of Baptism can be received but once, use blood as food, &c., things which are not found in the Bible, or are even forbidden by the written Word of God; whence then do they learn that this is allowable? Nowhere else than from the tradition of the Catholic Church, and yet they reject tradition! How well founded and in accordance with truth is the teaching of the Catholic Church!

*Which is the greater authority in the Catholic Church, the Bible or tradition?*

Both are of equal authority, for each contains the word of God, as the Council of Trent declares in these words: "All books, of the Old as well as of the New Testament, because God is the sole author of each, as also the traditions in regard to dogma and moral teachings which are either taught orally by Christ Himself, or are inspired by the Holy Ghost, and have been preserved in the Catholic Church, the holy Synod accepts and reveres with equal honor and reverence . . . . but whosoever does not accept these books, or does voluntarily despise these traditions, let him be anathema." (*Sess. iv. de script. can.*)

*Does not tradition, as the adversaries of the Church assert, contain human teachings invented by the pope?*

This assertion is a calumny; for only that is tradition which the apostles heard from Jesus, or received by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and did not write down, but passed by word of mouth to their successors, only this does



the Church receive as such, according to the rule: "That which always, everywhere, and by all true Catholics has been believed, is true tradition."

*Is not the Bible clear enough to be understood by all?*

No; for then it would not have been necessary for Christ to explain the Scriptures to His disciples, as this day's gospel states that He did, and it follows from this, that it is not every one who of his own judgment can understand and explain the Bible. That the Bible is not so plainly written that any one can understand it, is asserted, for instance, by St. Peter of St. Paul's epistles; (ii *Pet.* iii. 16.) and again, when writing to the Christians of Asia Minor: Understanding this first, that no prophecy of Scriptures is made by private interpretation; (ii *Pet.* i. 20.) and the eunuch of Queen Candace answered to the Apostle Philip's question, if he understood what he was reading in the Scriptures: How can I, unless some man show me? (*Acts* viii. 31.) If the Bible was intelligible to all, there would not be so many quarrels about matters of faith, and such innumerable sects among the heretics, who all appeal to the Bible, and with the Bible in their hands condemn and calumniate each other. The holy Bible inspired by the Holy Ghost, can only be understood and explained by the Holy Ghost Himself, or with His assistance by those to whom He is promised and given for this purpose. But the Holy Ghost is not promised to every one that he may understand and explain the Bible, as St. Paul testifies; (i *Cor.* xii. 8.) and not every one is able to read the Scriptures in their original language, and to discern whether the translations are correct or false, whether those to whom they are ascribed are really the authors, or if they are really the Word of God or not, &c. From this it is evident, that God who wishes that all men should come to the knowledge of truth and be saved, (i *Tim.* ii. 4.) has appointed, in matters belonging to faith and morals, another foundation besides the Scriptures on which all who aim after true knowledge, can securely build.

*What is this foundation?*

It is the infallible ministry of the Catholic Church, consisting of the pope, the successor of St. Peter and the visible head of the Church, and of the bishops and priests, the successors of the apostles, which, relying upon the pure, apostolic traditions, and with the assistance of Christ and of His Holy Spirit which He has promised to that ministry, decides and expounds the true meaning of Scripture in



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matters of faith and morals. This holy ministry cannot err, for Jesus will be always with it, and His Holy Spirit remains with it to the end of the world. (*Matt.* xxviii. 19, 20.; *John.* xiv. 16, 26; xvi. 13.) To this ministry all the Fathers refer as to the true and only guide of faith. Therefore all who do not wish to be driven about with every wind of doctrine by the wickedness of men, by cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive, (*Ephes.* iv, 14.) must obey this ministry; all who wish to enter the true fold of Jesus, His Church, or if belonging to it already, wish to rest secure from all error, must obey this ministry, for it is the pillar and ground of truth; (i *Tim.* iii. 15.) and that no one might look upon the word of God heard from these lawful ministers, as upon human teachings, but receive it as Christ's, the Redeemer gave it such authority that He said: Who heareth you, heareth me; who despiseth you, despiseth me. (*Catech. Rom, in praef. Luke* x. 16.)

*How, therefore, should the Catholic answer the objections which are frequently made by unbelievers against the holy Mass, the veneration of the saints, purgatory, &c.?*

He should answer: "I believe these and similar matters, because God has revealed them, and that He has revealed them, I believe, because it is proposed to be believed by the teacher, the Church, which is the pillar and ground of truth, governed by Jesus and His Holy Spirit, and therefore cannot err."

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER, CALLED DOMINICA IN ALBIS.

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*Why is this Sunday called Dominica in Albis or White Sunday?*

**B**ECAUSE on this day the neophytes laid aside the white dress which, as emblem of their innocence, they received on Holy Saturday, and put on their necks an Agnus Dei, made of white wax, and blessed by the pope, to remind them always of the innocence for which they were given, and of the meekness of the Lamb Jesus. For which reason the Church sings at the Introit: As new-born babes, alleluia: desire the rational milk without guile. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. (i *Pet.* ii. 2.) Rejoice to God our helper: sing aloud to the God of Jacob. (*Ps.* lxxx.) Glory, &c.



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that we, who have completed the paschal solemnities may, through Thy merciful bounty, ever retain them in our life and conversation. Through.

EPISTLE. (i *John* v. 4—10.) DEARLY BELOVED, Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This is he that came by water and blood, Jesus Christ: not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the spirit which testifieth that Christ is the truth. And there are three who give testimony in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that give testimony on earth: the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three are one. If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater: for this is the testimony of God, which is greater, because he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth in the Son of God, hath the testimony of God in himself.

INSTRUCTION. As in his gospel, so in his epistles, and especially in this, St. John proves the divinity of Christ which had been denied by some heretics. He says that Christ had come to purify all men from sin by water and blood, that is, by His blood shed on the cross for our reconciliation, and by the water of baptism to which He has given the power, the divine effect of His blood, and has thus proved Himself the divine Redeemer. This His divine dignity is attested by the Holy Ghost who lived in Christ and worked through Him with His fulness, and when sent by Him after our Lord's Ascension, produced most wonderful effect in the apostles and the faithful. As now on earth three, the Spirit, water, and blood, give testimony of Christ's divinity and agree in it, so also in heaven three, the Father, who calls Him His beloved Son, (*Matt.* iii. 17.) the Word, or the Son Himself, who wrought so many miracles, the Holy Ghost, when He descended upon Him at the baptism in the Jordan, (*Luke* iii. 22.) give testimony of His



divinity, and these also agree with one another in their testimony. If Christ is truly God, then we must believe in Him, and this faith must be a living one, that is, it must prove fertile in good works, and this faith conquers the world by teaching us to love God above all, to despise the world with its pleasures, and to overcome it by indifference. Let us strive to have such faith, and we shall overcome all temptations and gain the eternal crown.

ASPIRATION. O Lord Jesus! strengthen me by a lively faith in Thy divinity, so that I may not succumb in the spiritual combat against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and be eternally lost.

GOSPEL. (*John* xx. 19—31.) AT THAT TIME, When it was late that same day, the first of the week, and the doors were shut, where the disciples were gathered together, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came, and stood in the midst, and said to them: Peace be to you. And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples therefore were glad, when they saw the Lord. He said therefore to them again: Peace be to you. As the Father hath sent me, I also send you. When he had said this, he breathed on them; and he said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained. Now Thomas, one of the twelve, who is called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him: We have seen the Lord. But he said to them: Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days, again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said: Peace be to you. Then he said to Thomas: Put in thy finger hither, and see my hands, and bring hither thy hand, and put it into my side;





and be not faithless, but believing. Thomas answered and said to him: My Lord and my God. Jesus saith to him: Because thou hast seen me, Thomas, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed.\* Many other signs also did Jesus in the sight of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, you may have life in his name.

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\* What follows is omitted on the Feast of St. Thomas, 21st of December.



*Why does Christ so often wish peace to the apostles?*

To show that He only, by His death and resurrection, has made peace between God and man, and that His followers should be known by their harmony. (*John* xiii. 35.) There is a threefold peace: peace with God, by avoiding sin; peace with ourselves, that is, a good conscience; peace with our neighbor, by the exercise of charity. This threefold peace is necessary for our salvation.

*Why did Jesus breathe upon the apostles when giving them the power to forgive sin?*

To show that as bodily life was once given to Adam by the breath of God, so should the spiritual life be given henceforth by the apostles and their successors, through the Holy Ghost in the Sacrament of Penance, to the children of Adam who were spiritually dead.

*Why did God permit Thomas to doubt the Resurrection of Christ?*

That Thomas, as well as we, says St. Gregory, should be strengthened in humble belief in the Resurrection of Christ, and that all doubts should be removed.

*Had Thomas true faith when with his own eyes he saw Christ?*

Yes, for he saw Christ only in His humanity, and yet testified to His divinity by exclaiming: My Lord and my God!

*Is it true, meritorious faith not to be ready to believe before seeing that which is to be believed?*

By no means; for faith consists precisely in firmly holding as true that which is not seen. Therefore Christ calls him blessed who has not seen and yet believes.

*When is faith true and meritorious?*

That is true faith which firmly believes all that God has revealed, whether written or unwritten, and when one lives in accordance with that faith; for faith in Jesus simply does not save us, when that which He has commanded is not performed. (*Matt.* vii. 21.; *James* ii. 20.) That faith is meritorious which without doubting and without hesitation willingly submits the understanding to revealed truths which it cannot comprehend, and this for the love of God, who is eternal truth and cannot deceive.



*Whence do we know for certain that God has revealed certain things?*

From the Church of Christ which alone preserves the revealed word of God faithfully and uncorrupted, as it is contained in the Bible and in tradition; by the Holy Ghost all truth is given to the Church, and Christ remains with her until the end of the world. (*Matt. xxviii. 20.*)

*Has the Church of Christ any marks by which it may be known?*

Christ's Church has these four marks: it is One, it is Holy, it is Catholic, and it is Apostolic.

*How is the Church one?*

The Church is one, because all its members agree in one faith, are all in one communion, and are all under one head. (*Matt. xvi. 18.; Eph. iv. 3—7.*)

*How is the Church Holy?*

The Church is Holy, in her Founder, Jesus Christ, and by teaching a holy doctrine, by inviting all to a holy life, and by the eminent holiness of so many thousands of her children.

*How is the Church Catholic?*

The Church is Catholic or Universal, because she subsists in all ages, teaches all nations, (*Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.*) and maintains all truth.

*How is the Church Apostolic?*

The Church is Apostolic, because she comes down by a perpetual succession from the apostles of Christ, and has her doctrine, her orders, and her mission from them.

*Which is this true Church?*

The Roman Catholic Church, for she alone has these marks. She is One in her head, the Pope of Rome, in her doctrine, and in her Sacraments, which is evident since she excludes all those who do not accept all her dogmas. She is Holy, for Christ her Founder is holy; and her doctrine and Sacraments lead to holiness, as shown by the multitude of her saints whose sanctity God affirms by great miracles. No sect has saints. She is Catholic or Universal, for she has been in existence always from the



times of the apostles, as is clearly shown by the fact that from the times of the apostles there have always been some who separated from her and founded sects. The Catholic Church has always existed, and cannot perish or become corrupt, since Christ has promised to remain with her to the end of the world; she is also spread over the whole world, is always being announced to all nations, and is fitted for all generations and for all people. She is Apostolic, for she accepts no doctrine which does not come from the apostles, and she can prove that the ministers of the Church, the bishops, have come down in unbroken succession from the apostles.

*Can those who remain outside the Catholic Church be saved?*

The Council of Trent (*Sess. V. in the Introduction*) assigns the Catholic faith as the one without which it is impossible to please God, and the Roman Catechism teaches: (*i part. art. 9.*) "The Church is also called Catholic or Universal, because all who desire eternal salvation must cling to, and embrace her, like those who entered the ark to escape perishing in the flood." According to this doctrine of the Church, which the holy Fathers affirm, only those idolaters and obstinate heretics are excluded from salvation who knowingly deny the truth, and will not enter the Church. The Catholic Church does not condemn the unbelievers, she prays for them, leaves judgment to the Lord, who alone knows the heart, and knows whether the error is culpable or not, and she calls on all her members to pray for their enlightenment.

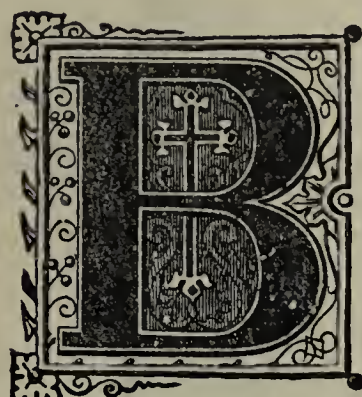
*Are we then already saved, if we belong to the true Church?*

No, we must also live up to the faith which she teaches, make good use of all means of salvation, regard and honor all her regulations and commands, for otherwise the words of Christ will be verified in us: And I say to you that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: but the children of the kingdom (the true Church) shall be cast out into exterior darkness. (*Matt. viii. 11.*)





## INSTRUCTION ON THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.



BECAUSE of the joyous Resurrection of Christ, and the graces flowing to us on account of it, the Church sings at the Introit of the Mass: The earth is full of the mercy of the Lord, alleluia; by the word of the Lord the heavens were established, alleluia, alleluia. Rejoice in the Lord, ye just: praise becometh the upright. (*Ps. xxii.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** O God, who in the humility of Thy Son hast raised up a fallen world; grant to Thy faithful a perpetual joyfulness; that whereas Thou hast rescued them from the perils of eternal death, Thou mayest bring them to the fruition of everlasting joy. Through &c.

**EPISTLE.** (*i Pet. ii. 21—25.*) DEARLY BELOVED, Christ suffered for us, leaving you an example that you should follow his steps. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. Who, when he was reviled, did not revile; when he suffered, he threatened not; but delivered himself to him that judged him unjustly; who his own self bore our sins in his body upon the tree, that we being dead to sins, should live to justice: by whose stripes you were healed. For you were as sheep going astray: but you are now converted to the shepherd and bishop of your souls.

**EXPLANATION.** St. Peter teaches the Christians patience in misery and afflictions, even in unjust persecution, and for this purpose places before them the example of Christ who, though most innocent, suffered most terribly and most patiently. Are we true sheep of the good Shepherd if at the smallest cross, at every word, we become angry and impatient?

**ASPIRATION.** O Lord Jesus! grant me the grace to follow Thee, my good Shepherd, and not to com-



plain and make threats whenever I am reprimanded, reviled or persecuted for justice' sake.



GOSPEL. (*John* x. 11—16.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to the Pharisees: I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. But the hireling, and he that is not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and flieth; and the wolf catcheth and scattereth the sheep: and the hireling flieth, because he is a hireling, and he hath no care for the sheep. I



am the good shepherd, and I know mine, and mine know me. As the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father, and I lay down my life for my sheep. And other sheep I have, that are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.

*How has Christ proved Himself a good Shepherd?*

By sacrificing His life even for His enemies, for those who did not yet love Him, (i *John* iv. 10; *Rom.* v. 8.) and could not reward Him. He has besides given Himself to us for our food.

*How are we to know if we are among the sheep of Christ, that is, His chosen ones?*

If we listen willingly to the voice of the Shepherd in sermons and instructions, in spiritual books and conversations; are obedient to it, and especially give ear and follow the rules of the Church through which the Good Shepherd speaks to us, (*Luke* x. 16.) "for he," says St. Augustine, "who has not the Church for his mother, will not have God for his father;" if we gladly receive the food of the Good Shepherd, that is, His sacred Body and Blood in holy Communion; if we are patient and meek as a lamb, freely forgiving our enemies; if we love all men from our heart, do good to them, and seek to bring them to Jesus.

*Who are the other sheep of Christ?*

The Gentiles who were not of the fold of Israel, whom Christ sought to bring by His disciples, and now by their successors, into His fold. — To these sheep we also belonged by our ancestors. O how grateful we should be to God, that He has brought us into the fold of His Church, and how diligently should we conduct ourselves as good sheep!

*When will there be but one fold and one shepherd?*

When, by the prayers of the Church and by her missionaries, all nations shall be converted to the only saving Church, constituting then one Church under one head. Let us pray that this may soon come to pass.

PRAYER. O Lord Jesus! Thou Good Shepherd who on the cross didst give Thy life for Thy sheep,



grant us, we beseech Thee, by Thy death, the grace to be faithful to Thy voice and teachings like obedient lambs that we may be one day numbered among Thy chosen ones in heaven.

### INSTRUCTION ON HOPE.

*I lay down my life for my sheep. (John x. 15.)*

*What has Christ obtained for us by His death?*

**T**HE remission of our sins, the grace to lead a life pleasing to God in this world, and eternal happiness in the next, for which we now firmly hope, with secure confidence may now expect, and most assuredly will obtain, if we do not fail on our part.

*In what does eternal happiness consist?*

In the beatific vision of God, which includes the most perfect love of Him, by which those who are saved become, as it were, one with Him, possessing in this union everything that they can possibly desire.

*What are the necessary means of obtaining eternal happiness?*

The grace of God, that is, His continual assistance; the practice of the three divine virtues: Faith, Hope and Charity; the keeping of God's commandments; the frequent use of the holy Sacraments, and constant prayer. These means must be diligently employed, for "God who", as St. Augustine says, "created us without us, will not save us without us," that is, without our coöperation.

*What may especially enable us to hope for eternal happiness?*

The infinite mercy and goodness of God, who from all eternity has loved us more than an earthly mother, and because of this love did not even spare His only-begotten Son, but gave Him up, for our sake, to the most bitter death. Will He then deny us heaven, He who in giving us His Son, has given us more than heaven itself? The fidelity of God: He has so often promised us eternal happiness, and in so many texts of Scripture so clearly explained that He wishes us to be saved, that He must keep His promise, for He is eternal truth and cannot deceive. (*Heb. vi. 18.*) He says not yes to-day, and no to-morrow, there is no change in Him, nor shadow of



alteration. (*James i. 17.*) The omnipotence of God, who can do all that He pleases, whom no one can oppose or prevent from doing what He will; if we have confidence in a rich and honest man who assures us he will assist us in need, how much more should we hope in the goodness, fidelity, and omnipotence of God!

*When should we make an act of Hope?*

As soon as we come to the use of reason and are sufficiently instructed concerning this virtue and its motives; in time of trouble or of severe temptation against this virtue; when receiving the holy Sacraments; every morning and evening, and especially at the hour of death.

*The same thing is to be observed in regard to acts of Faith and Love.*

## INSTRUCTION ON THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.



THE Church continues to rejoice and praise God for the Resurrection of Christ and sings accordingly at the Introit of this day's Mass: Shout with joy to God all the earth, alleluia: Sing ye a psalm to his name, alleluia. Give glory to his praise, alleluia, allel. allel. (*Ps. lxxv.*) Say unto God: How terrible are thy works, O Lord! In the multitude of thy strength thy enemies shall lie to thee. Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who showest the light of Thy truth to such as go astray, that they may return to the way of righteousness, grant that all, who profess the Christian name, may forsake whatever is contrary to that profession, and closely pursue what is agreeable to it. Through &c.

EPISTLE. (*i Peter ii. 11—19.*) DEARLY BELOVED, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims to refrain yourselves from carnal desires, which war against the soul, having your conversation good among the Gentiles: that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may, by the good works which they shall



behold in you, glorify God in the day of visitation. Be ye subject therefore to every human creature for God's sake: whether it be to the king as excelling, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of the good: for so is the will of God, that by doing well you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not as making liberty a cloak for malice, but as the servants of God. Honor all men: Love the brotherhood: Fear God: Honor the king. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thanks-worthy, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

EXPLANATION. St. Peter here urges the Christians to regard themselves as strangers and pilgrims upon this earth, looking upon temporal goods only as borrowed things, to which they should not attach their hearts, for death will soon deprive them of all. He then admonishes them as Christians to live in a Christian manner, to edify and lead to truth the Gentiles who hated and calumniated them. This should especially be taken to heart by those Catholics who live among people of a different religion; for they can edify them by the faithful and diligent practice of their holy religion, and by a pure, moral life lead them to the truth; while by lukewarmness and an immoral life, they will only strengthen them in their error, and thus injure the Church. St. Peter also requires the Christians to obey the lawful authority, and therefore, to pay all duties and taxes faithfully, because it is the will of God who has instituted lawful authority. Christ paid the customary tribute for Himself and Peter, (*Matt.* xvii. 26.) and St. Paul expressly commands that toll and taxes should be paid to whomsoever they are due. (*Rom.* xiii. 7.) St. Peter finally advises servants to obey their masters whether these are good or bad, and by so doing be agreeable to God who will one day reward them.

ASPIRATION. Grant me the grace, O Jesus! to consider myself a pilgrim as long as I live and as such to use the temporal goods. Give me patience in adversities, and so strengthen me, that I may willingly obey the law-



ful authority, though its laws and regulations should come hard and its tribute press upon me.



GOSPEL. (*John* xvi. 16—22.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: A little while, and now you shall not see me: and again a little while, and you shall see me: because I go to the Father. Then some of his disciples said one to another: What is this that he saith to us: A little while, and you shall not see me: and again a little while, and you shall see me, and, because I go to the Father? They said



therefore: What is this that he saith, A little while? we know not what he speaketh. And Jesus knew that they had a mind to ask him, and he said to them: Of this do you inquire among yourselves, because I said: A little while, and you shall not see me: and again a little while and you shall see me. Amen, amen I say to you, that you shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice: and you shall be made sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labor, hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but when she hath brought forth the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. So also you now indeed have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice: and your joy no man shall take from you.

*What is the meaning of Christ's words: A little while and you shall not see me; and again a little while and you shall see me?*

St. Chrysostom applies these words, which Christ spoke to His apostles a few hours before His passion, to the time between the death of Jesus and His Resurrection; but St. Augustine, to the time between the Resurrection and the Ascension, and then to the Last Judgment at the end of the world, and he adds: "This little while seems long to us living, but ended, we feel how short it is." In affliction we should console ourselves by reflecting, how soon it will terminate, and that it cannot be compared with the future glory, that is awaiting eternally in heaven him who patiently endures.

*Why did our Saviour tell His disciples of their future joys and sufferings?*

That they might the more easily bear the sufferings that were to come, because we can be prepared for sufferings which we know are pending; because He knew that their sufferings would be only slight and momentary in comparison with the everlasting joy which awaited them, like the pains of a woman in giving birth to a child, which are great indeed, but short, and soon forgotten by the mother in joy at the birth of the child. "Tell me" says St. Chrysostom, "if you were elected king but were obliged



to spend the night preceding your entrance into your capital city where you were to be crowned, if you were compelled to pass that night in much discomfort in a stable, would you not joyfully endure it in the expectation of your kingdom? And why should not we, in this valley of tears, willingly live through adversities, in expectation of one day obtaining the kingdom of heaven?"

PETITION. Enlighten me, O Holy Spirit! that I may realize that this present life and all its hardships are but slight and momentary, and strengthen me that I may endure patiently the adversities of life in the hope of future heavenly joys.

## CONSOLATION IN TRIALS AND ADVERSITIES.

*You shall lament and weep. (John xvi. 20.)*

**T**HAT Christian is most foolish who fancies that the happiness of this world consists in honors, wealth, and pleasures, while Christ, the eternal Truth, teaches the contrary, promising eternal happiness to the poor and oppressed, and announcing eternal affliction and lamentation to those rich ones who have their comfort in this world. How much, then, are those to be pitied who as Christians believe, and yet live as if these truths were not for them, and who think only how they can spend their days in luxury, hoping at the same time to go to heaven where all the saints, even Christ the Son of God Himself, has entered only by crosses and sufferings.

PRAYER IN TRIBULATION. O good Jesus! who hast revealed, that we can enter heaven only by many tribulations, (*Acts xiv. 21.*) hast called them blessed who in this world are sad, oppressed, and persecuted, but patiently suffer, and who hast also taught us, that without the will of Thy Heavenly Father, not one hair of our head can perish: (*Luke xxi. 18.*) I therefore submit entirely to Thy divine will, and beg Thy grace to endure all adversities for Thy sake, that after this life of misery I may enjoy eternal happiness with Thee in heaven.





## INSTRUCTION ON THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

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**T**HE Introit of this day's Mass is a canticle of praise and thanks: Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle, alleluia; because the Lord hath done wonderful things, alleluia; he hath revealed his justice in the sight of the Gentiles. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. His right hand hath wrought for him salvation; and his arm is holy. (*Ps. xcvii.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who makest the minds of the faithful to be of one will: grant unto Thy people to love what Thou commandest, and to desire what thou dost promise; that amidst the various changes of the world our hearts may there be fixed where true joys abide. Through &c.

EPISTLE. (*James i. 17—21.*) DEARLY BELOVED, Every best gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no change, nor shadow of alteration. For of his own will hath he begotten us by the word of truth, that we might be some beginning of his creatures. You know, my dearest brethren. And let every man be swift to hear, but slow to speak, and slow to anger: for the anger of man worketh not the justice of God. Wherefore, casting away all uncleanness, and abundance of naughtiness, with meekness receive the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

INSTRUCTION. Of all the gifts that come from God, the most excellent is the gospel and regeneration in baptism, by which He has made us His children and heirs of heaven. How great is this honor, and how earnestly we should endeavor to preserve it! To hear the word of God, when preached to us in sermons, will aid our endeavors. The admonition of the apostle to be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger, contains true wisdom, for: In the multitude of words there shall not want sin; but he that refraineth his lips is most wise. (*Prov. x. 19.*)



ASPIRATION. Aid me, O Lord, to preserve the dignity received in baptism, grant me a great love for Thy divine word, and strengthen me to subdue my tongue and to use it only for Thy glory.



GOSPEL. (*John* xvi. 5—14.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: I go to him that sent me: and none of you asketh me: Whither goest thou? But because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow hath filled your heart. But I tell you the truth: it is expedient to you that I go; for if I go not, the Paraclete



will not come to you: but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he is come, he will convince the world of sin, and of justice, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believed not in me: and of justice, because I go to the Father, and you shall see me no longer: and of judgment, because the prince of this world is already judged. I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will teach you all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but what things soever he shall hear, he shall speak, and the things that are to come he shall show you. He shall glorify me, because he shall receive of mine, and shall show it to you.

INSTRUCTION. As the disciples, in their grief at Christ's going to His passion and death, after the accomplishment of which He was to return to His Father, never once asked Him: "Whither goest Thou?" many Christians, because of their attachment to this world and its pleasures, never ask themselves: Whither am I going, whither leads my way? By my sinful life I am perhaps going towards hell, or will my little fervor for the right, my lukewarm prayers take me to heaven? Ark yourself in all earnestness, dear Christian, whither leads the way you are going? Is it the right path? if not, retrace your steps, and follow Jesus who by suffering and death entered heaven.

*Why could the Paraclete not come before the Ascension of Christ?*

Because the work of Redemption had first to be completed, Christ had to die, reconcile man to God, and enter into His glory, before the Spirit of truth and filial adoption could abide in man in the fulness of grace. From this we may learn that we must purify our hearts, and be reconciled to God, if we wish to receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

*How will the Holy Ghost convince the world of sin, of justice and of judgment?*

He will convince the world, that is, the Jews and Gentiles, of sin, by showing them through the preaching, the sanctity and the miracles of the apostles, as well as by gradual inward enlightenment, the grievous sins which they have committed by their infidelity and their vices; of justice,



by unveiling their error, and showing them that Christ whom they unjustly rejected, is the fountain of justice; of judgment, by showing them their condemnation in their prince and head, the devil, whom they served. This prince is now driven from idols and from the bodies of men, and his kingdom is destroyed in the name of Jesus by the apostles.

*Why did not Christ tell His apostles all He had to tell them?*

Because they could not yet comprehend and keep it in their memory; because they were still too weak, and too much attached to Jewish customs, and also because they were depressed; He therefore promised them the Holy Ghost, who would fit them for it by His enlightenment, and would teach them all truth.

*How does the Holy Ghost teach all truth?*

By guiding the Church, that is, its infallible administration, by His light to the knowledge of the truth necessary for the salvation of souls, preserving it from error; and by advancing those members of the Church who seek His light and place no obstacle in its way, in the necessary knowledge of truth.

*What is meant by: He shall not speak of himself, but what things soever he shall hear, he shall speak?*

That the Holy Ghost will teach us only that which He has heard from all eternity from the Father and Son; His teaching will, therefore, perfectly agree with Christ's teachings, for the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and Son and is equal God to them, and that which He teaches is also their doctrine, which is expressed in the words: He shall receive of mine.

ASPIRATION. Ah, my Lord and my God! direct my feet in the way of Thy commandments and preserve my heart pure from sin, that Thy Holy Spirit may find nothing in me deserving of reproach, that He may teach me all truth, and lead me to Thee, the eternal Truth, in heaven. Amen.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.



IN thanks for the redemption the Church sings at the Introit: Declare the voice of joy, and let it be heard, allel.: declare it even to the ends of the earth: the Lord hath delivered his people. (*Isai. xlvi. 20.*) Allel. allel. Shout with joy to God, all the earth: sing ye a psalm to his name, give glory to his praise. (*Fs. lxxv.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, from whom all good things proceed: grant to Thy suppliants, that by Thy inspiration we may think those things that are right, and by Thy guidance may perform the same. Through &c.

EPISTLE. (*James i. 22—27.*) DEARLY BELOVED, Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if a man be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he shall be compared to a man beholding his own countenance in a glass: for he beheld himself and went his way, and presently forgot what manner of man he was. But he that hath looked into the perfect law of liberty, and hath continued therein, not becoming a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. And if any man think himself to be religious, not bridling his tongue, but deceiving his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Religion clean and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless, and widows in their tribulation, and to keep one's self unspotted from the world.

EXPLANATION. True piety, as St. James here says, consists not only in knowing and recognizing the word of God, but in living according to its precepts and teachings; in subduing the tongue, the most dangerous and injurious of all our members; in being charitable to the poor and



destitute, and in contemning the world, its false principles, foolish customs and scandalous example, against which we should guard, that we may not become infected and polluted by them. Test thyself, whether thy life be of this kind.



ASPIRATION. O Jesus! Director of the soul! Give me the grace of true piety as defined by St. James.

GOSPEL. (*John* xvi. 23—30.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus saith to his disciples: Amen, amen, I say to you, if you ask the Father anything in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto, you have not asked anything in my name. Ask, and you shall receive, that your



joy may be full. These things I have spoken to you in proverbs. The hour cometh when I will no more speak to you in proverbs, but will show you plainly of the Father. In that day, you shall ask in my name: and I say not to you that I will ask the Father for you, for the Father himself loveth you, because you have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again I leave the world, and go to the Father. His disciples say to him: Behold, now thou speakest plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now we know that thou knowest all things, and thou needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou comest forth from God.

*Why does God wish us to ask of Him?*

That we may know and confess that all good comes from Him; that we may acknowledge our poverty and weakness which in all things need the help of God; that we may thus glorify Him and render ourselves less unworthy of the gifts which He has promised us.

*What is meant by asking in the name of Jesus?*

By this is meant praying with confidence in the merits of Jesus, "who," as St. Cyril says, "being God with the Father, gives us all good, and as mediator carries our petitions to His Father." The Church, therefore concludes all her prayers with the words: "Through our Lord, Jesus Christ." It means also that we should ask that which is in accordance with the will of Christ, namely, all things necessary for the salvation of our soul; to pray for temporal things merely in order to live happily in this world, is not pleasing to Christ and avails us nothing. "He who prays for what hinders salvation," says St. Augustine, "does not pray in the name of Jesus." Thus Jesus said to His disciples: Hitherto you have asked nothing in my name, "because," as St. Gregory says, "they did not ask for that which conduces to eternal salvation."

*Why is it that God sometimes does not grant our petitions?*

Because we often pray for things that are injurious, and like a good father, God denies them to us, in order to



give us something better; because He wishes to prove our patience and perseverance in prayer; because we generally do not pray as we ought; to be pleasing to God, prayer should be made when in a state of grace and with confidence in Christ's merits, for the prayer of a just man avail-eth much; (*James* v. 16.) we must pray with humility and submission to the will of God, with attention, fervor, sincerity, and with perseverance.

*At what special times should we pray?*

We should pray every morning and evening, before and after meals, in time of temptation, when commencing any important undertaking, and particularly in the hour of death. God is mindful of us every moment, and gives us His grace. It is, therefore, but just that we think often of Him during the day, and thank Him for His blessings.

*How can we, in accordance with Christ's teachings, (*Luke* xviii. 1.) pray at all times?*

By making the good intention when commencing our work, to do all for the love of God, and according to His most holy will; by raising our hearts to God at different times during the day; frequently making acts of faith, hope, love, and humility, and by repeating short ejaculations, such as: O Jesus! grant me grace to love Thee! Thee only do I desire to love! O be merciful to me! Lord hasten to help me.

*What is the signification of the different ceremonies that Catholics use at their prayers?*

The general signification is that God must be served, honored and adored, not only with the soul but with the body; when we pray aloud we praise God, not only with the mind, but also with our lips; when we pray with bowed and uncovered head, with folded, uplifted, or outstretched hands, on bended knees, with bowed and prostrated body, we show our reverence and subjection to the majesty of God, before whom we, who are but dust and ashes, cannot humble ourselves enough. These different ceremonies during prayer are frequently mentioned in both the Old and the New Testaments, and Christ and His apostles have made use of them, as for instance, the bending of the knees, falling on the face, &c.

*Which is the best of all prayers?*

The Lord's Prayer which Christ Himself taught us, and commands us to repeat. When said with devotion,



it is the most powerful of all prayers. (*Matt. vi. 9—13; Luke xi. 2—4.*)

## SHORT EXPLANATION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.

*Of what does the Lord's Prayer consist?*

**I**T consists of an address, as an introduction to the prayer, and of seven petitions which contain all that we should ask for the honor of God, and for our own salvation. The address is thus: Our Father who art in heaven.

*What does the word "Our" signify?*

In the communion of saints we should pray for and with all the children of God; we should be humble and preserve brotherly love towards all men.

*Who is it that is here called our "Father"?*

Our Father is God who has made us His children and heirs of His kingdom through His Son.

*Why do we say "Who art in heaven", since God is everywhere?*

To remind us that our true home is heaven, for which we should ardently long, because our Father is there, and there He has prepared our inheritance.

*For what do we ask in the first petition: "Hallowed be Thy name?"*

That we and all men may truly know, love, and serve God.

*For what do we pray in the second petition: "Thy kingdom come."*

That the Church of God, the kingdom of Christ, may extend over the whole earth, and the kingdom of sin and the devil be destroyed; that Christ may reign in our hearts and in the hearts of all; and that God will deign to receive us into the kingdom of heaven when our earthly pilgrimage is ended.

*For what do we ask in the third petition: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven?"*

We beg that God would enable us, by His grace, to do His will in all things, as the blessed do it in heaven. In these three petitions we seek, as taught by Christ, first the kingdom of God, that all the rest may be added unto us. (*Luke xii. 31.*)



*For what do we ask in the fourth petition: "Give us this day our daily bread?"*

We beg for all necessities for body and soul.

*Why does it say, "this day?"*

The words "this day" signify that we should not be over anxious for the future, but place all our confidence in God who will provide the necessities of life.

*What do we ask for in the fifth petition: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us?"*

We beg that God will forgive us our sins, as we forgive others their offenses against us. Those who make this petition, and still bear enmity towards their neighbor, lie in the face of God, and will not receive forgiveness. (*Mark xi. 25, 26.*)

*What is asked for in the sixth petition: "Lead us not into temptation?"*

We ask God to avert all temptations or at least not to abandon us when we are tempted. We cannot, indeed, be entirely free from them in this world, they are even necessary and useful for our salvation: for without temptation there is no combat, without combat no victory, and without victory no crown.

*What do we ask for in the seventh petition: "Deliver us from evil?"*

We beg that God would free us from all evil of soul and body.

## INSTRUCTION CONCERNING THE PROCESSIONS ON ROGATION DAYS.

*What are processions?*

**P**ROCESSIONS are solemn religious assemblages of persons marching together, and are instituted by the Catholic Church, partly to encourage the piety of the faithful, partly in remembrance of graces received, and in thanksgiving for them. Processions are approved of by the Fathers of the Church from the earliest ages. Those who take part in them in a true spirit will reap wholesome fruit of Christian piety.



*Are processions something new?*

No, they were the custom in the very earliest centuries of the Church, as testified by the acts of the martyrs, of Saints Cyprian, Lucius, Boniface, and the Fathers of the Church, Saints Basil, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Gregory, and others. They are also founded on Scripture. Thus King David caused the ark of the covenant to be carried in solemn procession to Jerusalem, (ii *Kings* vi.) and Solomon, his son, had it carried in solemn procession into the new temple. (III *Kings* VIII.1—6.)

*What do processions signify?*

Processions are a figure of our pilgrimage on earth; we are strangers and wanderers here below, our journey reaches from this valley of tears to the heavenly Sion, the procession therefore returns into the house of God; our journey leads over the thorny ways of life, the procession therefore takes place in the open air, where the pilgrim is exposed to all kinds of weather; they are a powerful incentive to fervor in prayer for the faithful; when hundreds, even thousands of faithful praise God aloud, or cry to Him for help and mercy, must not even the coldest heart be roused to vivid, fervent devotion, since Christ has promised to be present even where two or three are assembled in His name? Processions are an open acknowledgment that praise, thanks and adoration are due to God alone, while they are a public profession of our faith in Christ, the Crucified; they are a solemn thanksgiving for being permitted to profess Christ, our Lord, before the whole world, as also for all the graces obtained through Him; they are a public testimonial of our faith in the one, holy, Catholic Church, whose members are united by the same bond of faith, and who form under their head, Christ, one family in God. Finally, they are a sign of the triumph of Christian faith over the darkness of heathenism. If processions are solemnized with such intentions, with order and dignity, with fervent devotion, in the light of faith, they are indeed a pleasing sight for angels and men

*Why are banners and the cross carried in procession?*

The cross signifies that we are assembled as Christians, in the name of Jesus, in whose name we begin and end our prayers, through whose merits we expect all things from the Heavenly Father, and whom we must follow on our journey to heaven; the red and white banners indicate



that we must walk in all innocence under the banner of Christ, and fight unto death against sin, against the world and the devil, and be as ready as were the martyrs to give our life for our faith; the blue banners indicate that we must walk the road of self-denial and mortification, with really humble and penitent feelings for our sins. The banners are also emblematic of Christ's victory over death and hell, and of the triumph of His religion over the pagans and Jews.

*Why do we go around the fields in processions?*

To beg God to bless the fields with His fatherly hand, to give and preserve the fruits of the earth, and as He fills the animals with blessings, and gives them food at the proper time, so may He give to us also our necessary food.

*What is the origin of the procession on St. Mark's day and on Rogation Days?*

The procession on St. Mark's day was instituted even before the time of Pope Gregory the Great (607) who, however, brought it into fervent practice, "in order," as he says, "to obtain, in a measure, forgiveness of our sins." The same pontiff introduced another, called the Sevenfold Procession, because the faithful of Rome took part in it in seven divisions, from seven different Churches, meeting in the Church of the Blessed Virgin. It was also named the Pest Procession, because it was ordered by St. Gregory to obtain the cessation of a fearful pestilence which was at that time raging in Rome, and throughout all Italy. This pestilence so poisoned the atmosphere that one opening his mouth to sneeze or gape would suddenly fall dead; (hence the custom of saying "God bless you," to one sneezing, and of making the sign of the cross on the mouth of one who gapes). The same holy pope ordered the picture of the Blessed Virgin, which is said to have been painted by St. Luke, to be carried in this procession, and that the intercession of this powerful mother be asked. God heard these supplications and the pestilence ceased. It is said that the processions in Rogation Week owe their origin to St. Mamertus, Bishop of Vienne in France; in the neighborhood of which city there were, in the year 469, terrible earthquakes which caused great destruction, the fruits perished and various plagues afflicted the people. The saintly bishop assembled the faithful, recommended them to seek refuge in the merciful God, and led them in procession around the fields. Such processions spread over France, and gradually throughout the Christian world; they are held



in order to obtain from God the averting of universal evils, such as war, famine, and pestilence, and are, at the same time, a preparation for the Ascension of Christ who is our most powerful mediator with His Father, and whom we should invoke especially during these days.

*With what intentions should we take part in a procession?*

With the intention of glorifying God, of thanking Him for all His graces, and of obtaining aid and comfort from Him in all our corporal and spiritual needs; with the view of professing our faith openly before the whole world, and with the sincere resolution of always following Christ, the Crucified, in the path of penance and mortification. He who entertains other intentions and takes part, perhaps, for temporal advantages, or for sinful pleasures, or to avoid labor, &c., sins against God and the Church who weeps over and condemns such abuses.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FESTIVAL OF THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD.

**A**T the Introit the Church sings the words which were spoken by the angels to the apostles and disciples, after the Ascension of our Lord: Ye men of Galilee, why wonder you, looking up to heaven? allel.: He shall so come as you have seen him going up into heaven. Allel., allel., allel. (*Acts i. 11.*) Oh, clap your hands, all ye nations; shout unto God with the voice of joy. (*Ps. xlv. 2.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, O Almighty God, that we who believe Thy only-begotten Son, our Redeemer, to have this day ascended into the heavens, may ourselves also in mind dwell amid heavenly things. Through the same &c.

LESSON. (*Acts i. 1—11.*) THE former treatise I made, O Theophilus, of all things which Jesus began to do and to teach, until the day on which, giving commandments by the Holy Ghost to the apostles whom he had chosen, he was taken up: to whom also he showed himself alive after his passion, by many



proofs, for forty days appearing to them, and speaking of the kingdom of God. And eating together with them, he commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but should wait for the promise of the Father, which you have heard (saith he) by my mouth: for John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence. They, therefore, who were come together, asked him, saying: Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? But he said to them: It is not for you to know the times or moments which the Father hath put in his own power; but you shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had said these things, while they looked on, he was raised up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they were beholding him going up to heaven, behold, two men stood by them in white garments, who also said: Ye men of Galilee, why stand you looking up to heaven? This Jesus who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come, as you have seen him going into heaven.

**EXPLANATION.** This gospel of St. Luke addressed to Theophilus, a Christian of note in Antioch, contains an account of the life, sufferings, and death of Jesus up to the time of His ascension into heaven. The Evangelist continues his account in the Acts of the apostles, in which he describes in simple words that which Jesus did during the forty days following His Resurrection, and the manner in which He ascended into heaven in the presence of His apostles. Rejoice that Christ to-day has entered into the glory gained by His sufferings and death, and pray: I rejoice, O King of heaven and earth, in the glory Thou hast this day attained in heaven. Sing to God, ye kingdoms of the earth: sing ye to the Lord: sing ye to God, who mounteth above the heaven of heavens to the east. Give ye glory to God for Israel, his magnificence and



his power is in the clouds. God is wonderful in his saints, the God of Israel is he who will give power and strength to his people, blessed be God. (*Ps.* lxxvii. 33—36.)



GOSPEL. (*Mark.* xvi. 14—20.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus appeared to the eleven as they were at table: and he upbraided them with their incredulity and hardness of heart, because they did not believe them who had seen him after he was risen again. (And he said to them: Go ye into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not



shall be condemned. And these signs shall follow them that believe. In my name they shall cast out devils: they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents: and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them: they shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover.) And the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God. But they going forth preached everywhere, the Lord working withal, and confirming the word with signs that followed.

*The part of this gospel which is within the marks of parenthesis, is the gospel for the feast of St. Francis Xavier.*

*Why did Christ say to His apostles: Go ye into the whole world and preach the gospel to all creatures?*

To show that no one is to assume the office of preaching, but must look for his mission from the lawful pastors of the Church. And when Christ sends His apostles into the whole world, to all nations without exception, He shows His willingness to save all men. If the designs of God are not fulfilled, the blame is not to be attributed to God, but to man, who either does not accept the doctrine of the gospel, or accepting, does not live in accordance with it, or else renders himself by his obduracy in vice, unworthy of the gospel.

*Is faith without good works sufficient for salvation?*

No, faith that is not active in love, not fruitful in good works, and therefore not meritorious, (*Gal. v. 6.*) is not sufficient for salvation. "Such faith," says St. Anselm, "is not the faith of a Christian, but the faith of the devil." Only he who truly believes in Christ and His doctrine, and lives in accordance with it, will be saved.

*Is ours then the true faith since all the faithful do not work miracles, as Christ has predicted?*

St. Gregory very beautifully replies to this question: "Because the Redeemer said that true faith would be accompanied by miracles, you must not think that you have not the faith, because these signs do not follow; these miracles had to be wrought in the beginning of the Church, because faith in her had to be increased by these visible



signs of divine power." And even now when such signs are necessary for the propagation of the faith, and victory over unbelief, God gives His faithful power to work them.

*Are miracles wrought now in the Catholic Church?*

Yes, for there have been at all times saints in the Church, who, as seen from their lives, have wrought miracles, on account of their faith, which even the heretics cannot deny; for instance St. Francis Xavier, who in the sight of the heathens, raised several dead persons to life. In a spiritual manner all pious Catholics still work such miracles; for, as St. Chrysostom says, "they expel devils when they banish sin, which is worse than the devil; they speak new tongues when they converse no longer on vain and sinful things, but on those which are spiritual and heavenly." "They take up serpents," says St. Gregory, "when by zealous exhortations they lift others from the shame of vice, without being themselves poisoned; they drink deadly things without being hurt by them, when they hear improper conversation without being corrupted or led to evil; they lay their hands upon the sick and heal them, when they teach the ignorant, strengthen by their good example those who are wavering in virtue, keep the sinner from evil, and similar things." Strive to do this upon all occasions, O Christian, for God willingly gives you His grace and you will thus be of more use to yourself and others, and honor God more than by working the greatest miracles.

*Where and how did Christ ascend into heaven?*

From Mount Olivet where His sufferings began, by which we learn, that where our crosses and afflictions begin which we endure with patience and resignation, there begins our reward. Christ ascended into heaven by His own power, because He is God, and now in His glorified humanity He sits at the right hand of His Father, as our continual Mediator.

*In whose presence did Christ ascend into heaven?*

In the presence of His apostles, and many of His disciples, whom He had previously blessed, (*Luke xxiv. 51.*) and who, as St. Leo says, derived consoling joy from His ascension. Rejoice, also, O Christian soul, for Christ has to-day opened heaven for you, and you may enter it, if you believe in Christ, and live in accordance with that faith. St. Augustine says: "Let us ascend in spirit with Christ, that when His day comes, we may follow with our body."



Yet you must know, beloved brethren, that not pride, nor avarice, nor impurity, nor any other vice ascends with Christ; for with the teacher of humility pride ascends not, nor with the author of goodness, malice, nor with the Son of the Virgin, impurity. Let us then ascend with Him by trampling upon our vices and evil inclinations, thus building a ladder by which we can ascend; for we make a ladder of our sins to heaven when we tread them down in combating them."

ASPIRATION. O King of glory! O powerful Lord! who hast this day ascended victoriously, above all heaven, leave us not as poor orphans, but send us, from the Father, the Spirit of truth whom Thou hast promised. Alleluia.

*Why is the paschal candle extinguished after the gospel on this day?*

To signify that Christ, of whom the candle is a figure, has gone from His disciples.

## INSTRUCTION ON MIRACLES.

*And these signs shall follow them that believe.*

*(Mark xvi. 17.)*

*What is a miracle?*

A miracle, as defined by St. Thomas of Aquin, is anything beyond the ordinary, fixed state of things that is done through God. Thus when the sun stands still in his course, when thousands are fed with five loaves and two small fishes, when by a word or simple touch the dead are raised to life, the blind see, and the deaf hear, these are things contrary to nature, and are miracles which can only be performed by God or those persons to whom God has given the power.

That God can work miracles, cannot be denied. God has made the laws of nature, and at any time it pleases Him, He can suddenly suspend them, and that God has at times done so, we have more solid and undeniable proofs than we have for the most renowned and best authenticated facts of history, far more witnesses testify to miracles, the whole world has believed them, and been converted by them; more than eleven millions of martyrs have died to confirm and maintain their truth; no one gives up his life for lies and deceptions; the Jews and pagans have admitted



them, but ascribed them to witchcraft and the power of demons rather than to God; by this they proved and acknowledged the truth of miracles, because in order to deny them, they were driven to false and absurd explanations of them.

*Can men work miracles?*

No; only God works miracles through man to whom He gives the power. The history of the Christian Church in all ages bears testimony, that men have wrought miracles in the name of Jesus, as, for example, the apostles and the saints.

*Can miracles be worked by the relics of saints, pictures, &c.?*

The Church, in the Council of Trent, solemnly declares, that we are never to believe that there is in any picture or relic any hidden power by which a miracle can be worked, and that we are not to honor or ask any such thing of them. Therefore no miracle can ever be worked by them, but God can perform miracles through them, and He has done so, as the holy Scriptures and the history of the Church of Christ both prove. But when through certain pictures (usually called miraculous pictures) miracles do take place, that no deception may occur, the Church commands that such a picture shall not be exposed for the veneration of the faithful, until the truth of the miracles performed is by a rigorous examination established beyond doubt; she then causes such pictures to be respectfully preserved as monuments of the goodness and omnipotence of God.

*Why are there not so many miracles in our times as there were in the first days of the Church?*

Because the Church is no longer in need of such extraordinary testimony to the truth of her teachings. Thus St. Augustine writes: "He who in the face of the conversion of the world to Christianity demands miracles, and strives to doubt those which have been wrought in favor of this most wonderful change, is himself an astonishing miracle of irrationality and stupidity;" and St. Chrysostom says: "The question is sometimes asked: How happens it there are not so many miracles now-a-days? The answer is, because the knowledge of Christ is propagated all over the earth, and the Church is like a tree which, having once taken deep root and grown to a certain height, no longer needs to be carefully watered and supported."

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

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**T**HIS Sunday and the whole week should serve as a preparation for the festival of Pentecost, that we may be enabled by good works and pious devotional exercises, to receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost. At the Introit the Church sings: Hear, O Lord, my voice, with which I have cried to thee, allel. My heart hath said to thee: I have sought thy face, thy face, O Lord, I will seek: turn not away thy face from me, allel. allel. The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? (*Ps. xxvi. 7—9.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** Almighty, everlasting God, grant us ever to have a will devoted to Thee, and to serve Thy majesty with a sincere heart. Through &c.

**EPISTLE.** (*i Peter iv. 7—11.*) DEARLY BELOVED, be prudent, and watch in prayers. But before all things, have a constant mutual charity among yourselves; for charity covereth a multitude of sins. Using hospitality one towards another without murmuring: as every man hath received grace, ministering the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the words of God: if any man minister, let him do it as of the power which God administereth; that in all things God may be honored through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**EXPLANATION.** The practice of the virtues which St. Peter here prescribes for the faithful, is an excellent preparation for the reception of the Holy Ghost, for nothing renders us more worthy of His visit than true love for our neighbor, the good use of God's gifts, and the faithful discharge of the duties of our state of life. Strive, therefore, to practise these virtues and thus make yourself less unworthy of the gifts of the Holy Ghost. Say daily during the week the following prayer:



Come, Holy Spirit, who hast assembled the people of all tongues in unity of faith, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, and kindle in them the fire of Thy divine love.



GOSPEL. (*John* xv. 26—27., to xvi. 1—4.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: When the Paraclete cometh, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, he shall give testimony of me: and you shall give testimony, because you are with me from the beginning. These things have I spoken to you, that you



may not be scandalized. They will put you out of the synagogues: yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth a service to God. And these things will they do to you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. But these things I have told you, that, when the hour shall come, you may remember that I told you.

*Why is the Holy Ghost called the Paraclete?*

Because He consoles those who suffer persecution for justice' sake, that is, those who are persecuted because of their truly Christian life, their defence of truth and justice whether by word or pen, or by their life, as did the apostles and other saints, who were filled with the greatest and sweetest delight while suffering for Jesus' sake.

*How did the Holy Ghost give testimony of Christ?*

Through the apostles and disciples whom He made so eloquent and so 'courageous that they intrepidly professed and preached Christ to be the Son of God, and the true Messiah. This doctrine He confirmed by astounding miracles, and sealed it by their blood which they shed in its defence. The Holy Ghost still gives testimony of Christ through the Church, that is, the clergy, through whom He speaks, and who must, therefore, be listened to reverently. We must also give testimony of Christ and profess by our lives, by patience in crosses and afflictions that He is our Teacher, our Lord, and our God; for if we do not thus acknowledge Him in this world, He will deny us before His Father in heaven. (*Matt. x. 33.*)

*Did the Jews sin in persecuting and putting to death the apostles?*

Undoubtedly; for although they erroneously believed they were doing God a service, their ignorance and error were very sinful and deserving of punishment, because they could easily have known and been instructed in the truth.

Those Christians who neglect all religious instruction hardly know what is necessary for salvation, and make light of many things which are grievous sins; as also those who are in doubt whether they justly or unjustly possess certain goods, and yet through fear of being compelled to make restitution, neglect to settle the doubt, such are in culpable ignorance.



*What must every Christian know and believe in order to be saved?*

That there is but one God, who has created and governs all things; that God is a just judge, who rewards the good and punishes the wicked; that there are in the Deity three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; that the Son of God became man for love of us, taught us, and by His death on the cross redeemed us; that the Holy Ghost sanctifies us by His grace, without which we cannot become virtuous or be saved; that man's soul is immortal.

PETITION. Send us, O Lord Jesus! the Paraclete, that He may console and strengthen us in all our afflictions. Enlighten us by Thy Holy Spirit that we may learn and live in accordance with the truths of faith. Amen.

### INSTRUCTION ON SCANDAL.

*These things have I spoken to you, that you may not be scandalized.*  
(John xvi. 1.)

*How is scandal given?*

**B**Y speaking, doing or omitting that which will be to others an occasion of sin. Scandal is given in different ways, for instance: if you dress improperly, speak improper words, or sing bad songs, by which you can see, that your neighbor will be tempted to think, desire, or act wrongly; or what is worse, if you act sinfully in the presence of others, or bring bad books, books against good morals, or against the holy faith, among people; if you incite others to anger, cursing, and vengeance, or if you prevent them from attending church, the sermon, or catechetical instruction, &c. In all these things you become guilty of scandal, as well as of all the sins to which it gives rise.

If at the Last Judgment we will be unable to give an account of our own sins, how then can we answer for the innumerable sins caused by the scandal we have given? Therefore Christ pronounces a terrible woe upon those who give scandal. Woe to that man, He says, by whom the scandal cometh! It were better for him, that a millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea. (*Matt. xviii.*)



*How do parents give scandal?*

By giving their children bad example; by excessive anger, cursing and swearing; by avarice, injustice and cheating; by discord and quarrels; by gluttony in eating and drinking; by extravagance and vanity in dress; by sneering at religion, good morals, &c.; by not keeping their children from evil company, but sometimes even bringing them into it; by not punishing and endeavoring to eradicate their children's vices. How much parents sin through such scandals, cannot be expressed; at the Day of Judgment their children will be their accusers!

*How do masters give scandal to their servants and those under their care?*

In the same way as parents do to their children; by keeping them away from, or not urging them by their own example or command to attend church on Sundays and holy-days; by giving them meat on fast-days; by commanding them to do sinful things, such as stealing, injuring others, &c.

## INSTRUCTION ON PREPARATION FOR PENTECOST.

1. **W**E should withdraw, after the example of the Blessed Virgin and the apostles, to some solitary place, or at least avoid, intercourse with others, as much as possible; speak but little, and apply ourselves to earnest and persevering prayer; for in solitude God speaks to man.
2. We should purify our conscience by a contrite confession, become reconciled to our neighbor, if we have lived in enmity; for the Holy Ghost, as a spirit of peace and purity, lives only in pure and peaceful souls. (*Ps. lxxv 3.*)
3. We should give alms according to our means, for it is said in the Acts of the Apostles (*Acts x.*) of the Gentile centurion Cornelius, that by prayer and alms-deeds he made himself worthy of the gifts of the Holy Ghost.
4. We should fervently desire to receive the Holy Ghost, and should give expression to this longing by frequent aspirations to God, making use of the prayer: "Come, O Holy Ghost, &c."



## INSTRUCTION ON THE GREAT FESTIVAL OF PENTECOST.

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*What festival is this?*

**I**T is the day on which the Holy Ghost descended in the form of fiery tongues, upon the apostles and disciples, who with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, were assembled in prayer in a house at Jerusalem. (*Acts ii.*)

*Why is this day called Pentecost?*

The word "Pentecost" is taken from the Greek, and signifies fifty. As St. Jerome explains it, this was the last of the fifty days, commencing with Easter, which the early Christians celebrated as days of rejoicing at the resurrection of the Lord.

*Why is this day observed so solemnly?*

Because on this day the Holy Ghost, having descended upon the apostles, the law of grace, of purification from sin, and the sanctification of mankind, was for the first time announced to the world; because on this day the apostles, being filled with the Holy Ghost, commenced the work of purifying and sanctifying mankind, by baptizing three thousand persons who were converted by the sermon of St. Peter; and because on this day the Church of Jesus became visible as a community to the world, and publicly professed her faith in her crucified Saviour.

*Why did the Holy Ghost descend on the Jewish Pentecost?*

Because on their Pentecost the Jews celebrated the anniversary of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, and God would show by sending the Holy Ghost on this day, that the Old Law had ceased and the New Law commenced. God also chose this time, that the Jews who on this day came together from all countries to Jerusalem to celebrate the Pentecost, might be witnesses of the miracle, and hear the New Law announced by the apostles.

*Why is the baptismal font blessed on the vigil of Pentecost,  
as on Holy Saturday?*

Because the Holy Ghost is the Author of all sanctity and the Fountain of baptismal grace, and because in the



Acts (i. 5.) the descent of the Holy Ghost itself is called a baptism.

In the Introit of the Mass the Church rejoices at the descent of the Holy Ghost and sings: The Spirit of the Lord hath filled the whole earth, *allel.*; and that which containeth all things hath knowledge of the voice, *Allel., allel., allel.* (*Wisd.* i. 7.) Let God arise, and his enemies be scattered: and let them that hate him, fly before his face. (*Ps.* 67.) *Glory &c.*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who on this day didst instruct the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit: grant us in the same spirit to relish what is right, and ever to rejoice in His consolation. Thro'. — in the unity of the same, &c.

LESSON. (*Acts* ii. 1—11.) WHEN the days of Pentecost were accomplished, they were all together in one place; and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them: and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues, according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak. Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men, of every nation under heaven. And when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded in mind, because that every man heard them speak in his own tongue: and they were all amazed, and wondered, saying: Behold, are not all these that speak Galileans? And how have we heard every man our own tongue wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia, Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphilia, Egypt, and the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews also and Proselytes, Cretes and Arabians: we have heard them speak in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.



*Why did the Holy Ghost come upon the apostles in the form of fiery tongues?*

The appearance of fiery tongues indicated the gift of language imparted to the apostles by the Holy Ghost, and inflamed their hearts and the hearts of the faithful with the love of God and their neighbor.

*Why did a mighty wind accompany the descent?*

To direct the attention of the people to the descent of the Holy Ghost, and to assemble them to hear the sermon of the Apostle Peter.

*What special effects did the Holy Ghost produce in the apostles?*

He freed them from all doubt and fear; gave them His light for the perfect knowledge of truth; inflamed their hearts with the most ardent love, and incited in them the fiery zeal for the propagation of the kingdom of God, strengthened them to bear all sufferings and persecutions, (*Acts v 41.*) and gave them the gift of speaking in various languages, and of discerning spirits.

GOSPEL. (*John xiv. 23—31.*) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: If any one love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him. He that loveth me not, keepeth not my words: and the word which you have heard is not mine, but the Father's, who sent me. These things have I spoken to you, abiding with you: but the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, do I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid. You have heard that I said to you, I go away, and I come unto you. If you loved me, you would indeed be glad, because I go to the Father; for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it came to pass, that when it shall come to pass you may be-





lieve. I will not now speak many things with you; for the prince of this world cometh, and in me he hath not anything. But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given me commandment, so do I.

*Why is the Holy Ghost expressly called "Holy," since this attribute is due to each of the divine persons?*

Because He is the Author of inward sanctity and of all supernatural gifts and graces, and therefore to Him is especially ascribed the work of man's sanctification.



*What does the Holy Ghost effect in man?*

He enlightens him that he may know the truths of religion and salvation, and the beauty of virtue; He moves him to desire, to aim after and to love these things; He renews his heart by cleansing it from sin, and imparts to him the supernatural gifts and graces by which he can become sanctified, and He brings forth in him wonderful fruits of holiness.

*What are the gifts of the Holy Ghost?*

According to the Prophet Isaias they are seven: 1. The gift of wisdom, which enables us to know God, to esteem spiritual more than temporal advantages, and to delight only in divine things. 2. The gift of understanding, by which we know and understand that which our faith proposes to our belief; children and adults should pray fervently for this gift, especially before sermons and instructions in the catechism. 3. The gift of counsel, which gives us the knowledge necessary to direct ourselves and others when in doubt, a gift particularly necessary for superiors, for those about choosing their state of life, and for married people who live unhappily, and do not know how to help themselves. 4. The gift of fortitude, which strengthens us to endure and courageously overcome all adversities and persecutions for virtue's sake. 5. The gift of knowledge, by which we know ourselves, our duties, and how to discharge them in a manner pleasing to God. 6. The gift of piety, which induces us to have God in view in all our actions, and infuses love in our hearts for His service. 7. The gift of the fear of the Lord, by which we not only fear the just punishment, but even His displeasure at every sin, more than all other things in the world.

*Which are the fruits of the Holy Ghost?*

As St. Paul (*Gal. v. 22—23.*) enumerates them, they are twelve: 1. Charity. 2. Joy. 3. Peace. 4. Patience. 5. Benignity. 6. Goodness. 7. Longanimity. 8. Mildness. 9. Faith. 10. Modesty. 11. Contineny. 12. Chastity. To obtain these fruits as well as the gifts of the Holy Ghost, we should daily say the prayer: "Come, O Holy Ghost, &c."

*Why does Christ say: The Father is greater than I?*

Christ as God is in all things equal to His Father, but as Christ was at the same time Man, the Father was certainly greater than the Man-Christ.



*Why does Christ say: I will not now speak many things with you?*

Christ spoke these words a short time before His passion, and by them He wished to say that the time was near at hand when Satan, by his instruments, the wicked Jews, would put Him to death, not because Satan had this power over Him, but because He Himself wished to die in obedience to the will of His Father.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE MONDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

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*The Introit of the Mass is the same as on the Feast of Corpus Christi.*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who didst give the Holy Ghost to Thine apostles: grant to Thy people the fruit of their pious petition; that to whom Thou hast given faith, Thou mayst also impart peace. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Acts* x. 34., 42—48.) IN THOSE DAYS, Peter opening his mouth, said: Men brethren, the Lord commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is he who was appointed by God to be judge of the living and of the dead: to him all the prophets give testimony, that through his name all receive remission of sins, who believe in him. While Peter was yet speaking these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word. And the faithful of the circumcision, who came with Peter, were astonished, for that the grace of the Holy Ghost was poured out upon the Gentiles also. For they heard them speaking with tongues, and magnifying God. Then Peter answered: Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.



EXPLANATION. This lesson relates the manner in which the Holy Ghost descended upon the converted Gentiles who were assembled with the centurion Cornelius, and who heard the sermon of St. Peter with hearts burning for knowledge. — Endeavor to assist at sermons with a heart desirous of learning, and the Holy Ghost will enlighten you; and do not fail to invoke the Holy Ghost before the sermon.



GOSPEL. (*John* iii. 16—21.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to Nicodemus: God so loved the world, as to give his only-begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in him may not perish, but may have life everlasting.



For God sent not his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by him. He that believeth in him is not judged: but he that doth not believe is already judged, because he believeth not in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment: because the light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the light, for their works were evil: for every one that doth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, that his works may not be reproved. But he that doth truth cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, because they are done in God.

*How has God shown His love for us?*

He has given us His only Son for our Teacher and Redeemer, delivering Him up for our sake to the most ignominious and painful death of the cross. For God so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son: that whosoever believeth in Him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting. (*John iii. 16.*)

*Why, then, are so many lost?*

Because they despise this love of God and reject Christ, the Light of the world, that is, do not follow His teachings, even hate Him, loving more the darkness, that is, the suggestions of Satan and the pleasures of this world.

*Has the Holy Ghost come into this world as a light?*

Yes; for He inwardly enlightens the hearts of men by His grace, that they may properly understand the truths of salvation; and as the natural light leads us out of darkness, so the Holy Ghost by His supernatural light leads us out of the darkness of ignorance, and from the snares and dangers of the world and the devil, into eternal happiness.

## MOTIVES FOR THE LOVE OF GOD.

*God so loved the world, as to give His only-begotten Son.*  
(*John iii. 16.*)

**W**HAT will we render to God for the love He has shown us heretofore and still manifests towards us every moment? He has loved us from all eternity when



we were not, and although He knew that we would be sinners and enemies to Him, He loved us with infinite love, showing His love by creating all things for us. But even this was not enough; to release us from the misery of sin, He gave us His only-beloved Son, who, clothing Himself with our mortal flesh, and having become our equal in all things, except in sin, shed the last drop of His blood on the cross as a ransom for our sins; gives Himself to us for our nourishment in the most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar; offers Himself daily, in the Mass, to His Heavenly Father for us, and is, day and night, present with us in the most adorable Sacrament. What more could the infinite love of God give us? One thing more — the Holy Ghost, and Him He has sent with all His gifts and fruits.

"If," says St. Bernard, "we love him who does us good, assists us in our needs, undergoes danger in our behalf, how then, must we love Him who has given us all that we have; who has given us the angels to be our guardians, the sun, moon, and stars to shine for us, the earth for our dwelling, the elements, the plants, the animals to supply our necessities, our food, our pleasure; who continually preserves us, that we fall not back into original nothingness; who constantly guards us from innumerable dangers and evils; who has not only endangered His life, but has really suffered the most bitter death for us; who so mercifully forgives us all our sins, heals all our weaknesses, keeps us from perdition, and crowns us with mercy and compassion!" (*Ps. cii. 4.*)

Let us therefore with our whole heart love this good and gracious God, who has loved us without any merit of ours, let us be ashamed that we have until now loved Him so little, and performed so little for love of Him. God seems to live only for us, to occupy Himself only with us, and we — alas! instead of living for Him alone, have until now lived only for the world, lived only to offend Him! Let us cast ourselves down in sorrow before the face of God, and exclaim with St. Francis of Assisi: "My God and my all! What art Thou? and what am I, but a worm of the earth? Most Holy Lord! Would that I loved Thee! Sweetest Lord! Would that I loved Thee!" Say with St. Ignatius:

Only Thy grace,  
Only Thy love,  
Only that, O Lord,  
Only that give me.

For it makes me so rich,  
I ask no more;  
If I am Thine and Thou mine,  
Then shall I be eternally happy.





## INSTRUCTION ON THE TUESDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

The Introit of the Mass is: Receive the joy of your glory, allel.; giving thanks to God, allel.; who hath called you to a heavenly kingdom, allel., allel., allel. (IV. *Esd.* 2.) Attend, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. (*Psa.* lxxvii.)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that the power of the Holy Ghost may be ever present with us to purify our hearts from sin, and to defend us from all adversity. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Acts* viii. 14—17) IN THOSE DAYS, when the apostles that were in Jerusalem had heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John. Who, when they were come, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: for he was not as yet come upon any of them, but they were only baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands upon them and they received the Holy Ghost.

### ON CONFIRMATION.

#### *Is Confirmation a Sacrament?*

**Y**ES, for it has the three marks of a Sacrament: the visible sign, the invisible sanctifying grace, and institution by Christ.

#### *Did Christ institute this Sacrament?*

Christ is the Author of this Sacrament as He is of all the others, with this difference only, as St. Thomas of Aquin says, that He instituted this only by promise, for it was necessary that He should die, should rise from the dead, and ascend into heaven (*John* xvi. 7.) before giving the fulness of the Holy Ghost, in which consists the proper effect of this Sacrament. This according to the tradition of the Fathers, is the doctrine of the infallible Church. Thus St. Clement, a disciple of the apostles, writes that St. Peter taught him, and that the other apostles had also announced it, in accordance with the command of the



Lord. That the apostles administered this Sacrament by Christ's command, is clear from the Acts of the Apostles (viii. 14—17.) which state, that Peter and John laid their hands upon the newly baptized at Samaria, and prayed over them, thus imparting to them the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which St. Paul also did to the baptized at Ephesus. (*Acts* xix. 5, 6.)

*What is the visible sign in confirmation?*

The imposition of the bishop's hands, the anointing with holy chrism, and the words: "N. N., I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, &c."

*What graces are received in this Sacrament?*

This Sacrament gives to those who have been baptized, the Holy Ghost with the plenitude of His gifts, and thus completes the grace of baptism; for which reason confirmation is also called by the holy Fathers: "Completion," "Sealing." It especially gives strength to profess the faith firmly, and to live in accordance with it, and is therefore called Confirmation from the Latin confirmare, to strengthen, to confirm; it elevates man, who has by baptism become a child of God, to the dignity of a soldier of Christ, enrolls him as a warrior under the banner of the cross, imprints upon him an indelible mark, and thus distinguishes him from those who have been baptized, but not confirmed, and can therefore be received but once.

*Who has power to administer confirmation?*

The ordinary ministers of this Sacrament are the bishops only; for according to the Acts of the Apostles (viii. 16.) only the apostles and their successors who are bishops, can impart the Holy Ghost by imposition of hands.

*What is the holy chrism which the bishop uses in confirmation?*

The holy chrism which Christ commanded to be used in confirmation, consists of balsam and olive-oil mixed, and signifies the plenitude of grace which comes down from Christ through the Holy Ghost upon those to be confirmed; the balsam represents the good odor of the edifying life which those confirmed should lead, as said by the apostle: We are a good odor of Christ; (ii *Cor.* ii. 15.) the balsam also indicates, that as the bodies of the dead are preserved from corruption when embalmed with it, so the soul by the heavenly grace obtained in confirmation, is preserved from the infection of sin.



*Why is the forehead anointed with chrism in the form of a cross?*

To remind the Christian that he is never to be deterred by either shame or fear from the public acknowledgment of the name of Jesus, but must fight valiantly as a true soldier of Christ, under the banner of the cross, against all the enemies of his salvation.

*Why does the bishop impose his hands upon those to be confirmed?*

This indicates that the actual imparting of the Holy Ghost is taking place, (*Heb. vi. 2.*) and that the person confirmed is placed under God's special protection.

*What prayers are said by the bishop while he imposes his hands upon those to be confirmed?*

The bishop repeats the following prayers: Almighty, eternal God, who hast deigned to regenerate these Thy servants by water and the Holy Ghost, who hast also granted them the remission of all their sins, pour out from heaven the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit, Thy Paraclete. Amen.

The spirit of wisdom and understanding. Amen.

The spirit of counsel and of fortitude. Amen.

The spirit of knowledge and of piety. Amen.

Fill them with the spirit of fear towards Thee, and sign them with the sign of the cross of Christ, granting them eternal life, through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who with Thee in the unity of the same God the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth for all eternity. Amen.

*Why does the bishop ask especially for the spirit of the fear of the Lord?*

Because the filial fear of the Lord is the foundation of all good, the beginning of all wisdom, the fountain of life, and gains for him who possesses it eternal happiness. (*Ps. cxi. 1.*)

*Why does the bishop give those confirmed a slight blow on the cheek?*

To remind them that like Christ and the apostles, they must courageously bear all adversities and persecutions for the holy faith, and thus obtain that true peace which the bishop wishes them.



*Why do the sponsors lay their right hand on the shoulder of the one to be confirmed?*

To show that they are witnesses of the renewal of his faith; that they will exhort him, when necessary, to preserve the faith; that they will walk before him in the true path of virtue by good example. [*In regard to the spiritual affinity arising from confirmation, see the instruction concerning baptism on the feast of the Holy Trinity.*]

*Is confirmation necessary for salvation?*

It is not absolutely necessary for salvation, but he who having the opportunity would neglect to receive it, would commit a grievous sin, even a mortal sin, because he openly shows by this, that he has no regard for the assistance of the Holy Ghost. Baptism lays the foundation for the Christian religion, but confirmation crowns the work baptism has commenced, because in confirmation, as the Roman Catechism teaches, the form of a true Christian is perfected.

*What is required of those who are to be confirmed?*

They must be in the state of grace, or purified by a good confession from the sins committed after baptism, for, to receive this Sacrament while in mortal sin, would be a sacrilege; they should be well instructed in the truths of faith, especially in those relating to confirmation; they should have a sponsor or witness who has been confirmed; they should arouse in themselves a great desire for the gifts of the Holy Ghost; they should receive the Sacrament with great reverence and devotion, and while being confirmed should make the resolution to become and remain henceforth true, zealous Catholics; finally, those who are to be confirmed, should never forget that they must be present from the first imposition of hands by the bishop, because this is the especial sign to which the granting of the gifts of the Holy Ghost is annexed. It is seen from all this, that it is not advisable to allow infants to be confirmed, because they do not know what they receive, nor can they be properly prepared, and they can be saved even if they die without confirmation.

*What should be done after receiving confirmation?*

Those confirmed should remain in church some time, and thank the Holy Ghost for the graces received; renew the promise to serve God faithfully henceforth, and to preserve the faith. They should daily show themselves, by an edifying life,



to be true Catholic Christians, and thus add to the truth that unbelievers may also see the fruits of confirmation, and learn to love and respect a Church, that gives such glorious gifts to her children.

### PRAYER AFTER CONFIRMATION.

*[To be said often during the year.]*

I thank Thee, O Holy Ghost, that Thou hast given me Thy grace in the Sacrament of Confirmation to strengthen me against all temptations and persecutions, and I most humbly beseech Thee that by Thy inward inspirations Thou mayst continually so urge me on, that in all the dangers to my salvation, I may faithfully coöperate with the graces I have received, and never from fear or false shame transgress the commandments of God and the Church. Let me die rather than ever offend Thee, O Holy Ghost, or refuse to heed Thy inspirations, or drive Thee from me by mortal sin. Amen.

### WEDNESDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

*[Ember-day.]*

LESSON. (*Acts* v. 12—16.) IN THOSE DAYS, Were many signs and wonders wrought among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. But of the rest no man durst join himself unto them: but the people magnified them. And the multitude of men and women that believed in the Lord was more increased, insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that when Peter came, his shadow at the least might overshadow any of them, and they might be delivered from their infirmities. And there came also together to Jerusalem a multitude out of the neighboring cities, bringing sick persons and such as were troubled with unclean spirits, who were all healed.



EXPLANATION. In this porch of the temple the apostles met frequently because there they found occasion to prepare and bring the heathens to receive the faith of Christ. From this porch the Gentiles were permitted to enter the temple, and in order to open their eyes, God wrought, through the apostles, great miracles. St. Peter was especially distinguished, for even his shadow healed diseases, and he was the first to receive the Gentiles into the Church. Thus in the apostles were verified Christ's words: He that believeth in me, the works that I do, he also shall do, and greater than these shall he do. (*John* xiv. 12.)

GOSPEL. (*John* vi. 44—52.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to the multitude of the Jews: No man can come to me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day. It is written in the prophets: And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, cometh to me. Not that any man hath seen the Father, but he who is of God, he hath seen the Father. Amen, amen, I say unto you: He that believeth in me, hath everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven: that if any man eat of it, he may not die. I am the living bread, which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world.

INSTRUCTION. From these words of Jesus that no man comes to Him unless drawn by the Father, that is, as St. Cyril says, unless the Father move him through exhortations, instructions, or revelations, it is seen that the grace of God is necessary for conversion, faith, and eternal happiness. "But that you may be drawn," says St. Augustine, "pray." Ask God incessantly for help and grace, that He may draw you wholly to Him, nourish and strengthen you with the true bread, the flesh of His Son, and you will thus gain eternal life.



## FRIDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

[Ember-day.]

LESSON. (*Joel* ii. 23—27.) THUS saith the Lord God: And you, O children of Sion, rejoice, and be joyful in the Lord your God: because he hath given you a teacher of justice, and he will make the early and the latter rain to come down for you as in the beginning, and the floors shall be filled with wheat, and the presses shall overflow with wine, and oil. And I will restore to you the years, which the locust and the bruchus, and the mildew, and the palmer-worm hath eaten: my great host which I sent upon you. And you shall eat in plenty, and shall be filled: and you shall praise the name of the Lord your God, who hath done wonders with you: and my people shall not be confounded for ever. And you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel: and I am the Lord your God, and there is none besides: and my people shall not be confounded for ever, saith the Lord Almighty.

EXPLANATION. In the verses of the first and second chapters preceding this the prophet announces to the Jews punishments on account of their sins, and urges them to repentance; in this lesson he promises them a happy day in which the Teacher of justice, the Messiah will visit them with all graces. O happy penance which prepares for him who performs it, such great blessings both in this world and in the world to come!

GOSPEL. (*Luke* v. 17—26.) AT THAT TIME, It came to pass on a certain day, that Jesus sat teaching. And there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, that were come out of every town of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was to heal them. And behold men brought in a bed a man who had the palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him. And when they could not find by what way they might bring



him in, because of the multitude, they went up upon the roof, and let him down through the tiles with his bed into the midst, before Jesus. Whose faith when he saw, he said: Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. And the Scribes and Pharisees began to think, saying: Who is this who speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone? And when Jesus knew their thoughts, answering he said to them: What is it you think in your hearts? Which is easier to say: Thy sins are forgiven thee: or to say; Arise, and walk? But that you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy) I say to thee: Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thy house. And immediately rising up before them, he took up the bed on which he lay: and he went away to his own house, glorifying God. And all were astonished: and they glorified God. And they were filled with fear, saying: We have seen wonderful things to-day.

*[For explanation of this gospel see eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost.]*

#### SATURDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

*[Ember-day.]*

EPISTLE. (*Rom. v. 1—5.*) BRETHREN, Being justified by faith let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access through faith into this grace wherein we stand, and glory in the hope of the glory of the sons of God. And not only so, but we glory also in tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh patience: and patience trial, and trial hope, and hope confoundeth not: because the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us.

EXPLANATION. The Catholic Church has always maintained that not faith alone, which the devils have also, but faith manifesting itself by good works, justifies man. The Catholic Church teaches this in opposition to those



heretics who assert that by faith in Christ man is already justified, bringing as proof of their assertion the words of this chapter which St. Paul speaks concerning faith. The Church's doctrine in this respect is confirmed by St. Paul himself in many texts from his epistles, (i *Cor.* xiii. 2; i *Tim.* vi. 18.; *Tit.* iii. 8.) and by the traditions of all the Fathers of the Church. — Believe in Jesus and His word, but also practise this faith in works of love, and you will be saved.

*[For gospel and explanation see Thursday in the third week of Lent.]*

## FEAST OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

**T**HIS festival is celebrated on the Sunday after Pentecost, because as soon as the apostles were instructed and consoled by the Holy Ghost, they began to preach openly that which Christ had taught them.

*Why do we celebrate this festival?*

That we may openly profess our faith in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which is the first of Christian truths, the foundation of the Christian religion, and the most sublime of all mysteries; and that we may render thanks to the Father for having created us, to the Son for having redeemed us, and to the Holy Ghost for having sanctified us.

In praise and honor of the most Holy Trinity, the Church sings at the Introit of this day's Mass: Blessed be the holy Trinity and undivided Unity: we will give glory to him, because he hath shown his mercy to us. (*Tob.* xii.) O Lord, our Lord, how wonderful is thy name in all the earth! (*Ps.* viii. 1.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** Almighty, everlasting God, who hast granted to Thy servants, in the confession of the true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of Thy majesty, to adore the Unity: grant that, by steadfastness in the same faith, we may ever be defended from all adversities. Thro'.



EPISTLE. (*Rom. xi. 33—36.*) O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are his judgments, and how unsearchable his ways! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and recompense shall be made him? For of him, and by him, and in him, are all things: to him be glory forever. Amen.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul's exclamations, in this epistle, are caused by the inscrutable judgment of God in rejecting the Jews and calling the Gentiles. The Church makes use of these words to express her admiration for the incomprehensible mystery of the most Holy Trinity, which surpasses our understanding, and yet is the worthy object of our faith, hope and love. Although neither angels nor men can fathom this mystery, it cannot be difficult for the sound human intellect to believe it, since it is indubitably and evidently revealed by God, and we, in many natural and human things, accept for true and certain much that we cannot comprehend. Let us submit our intellect, therefore, and yield ourselves up to faith; as there was indeed a time when men were martyred, when even persons of all ages and conditions preferred to die rather than to abandon this faith, so let us rather wait until our faith is changed to contemplation, until we see the Triune God, face to face, as He is, and in the sight of that countenance become eternally happy. Thither should all our hopes, wishes, and desires be directed, and we should cease all fruitless investigations, endeavoring by humble faith and active love, to prove worthy of the beatific vision; for if we do not love Him who is our all, our last end and aim, and lovingly desire Him, we will have no hope of one day possessing Him.

ASPIRATION. O incomprehensible, Triune God! O Abyss of wisdom, power, and goodness! To Thee all glory and adoration! In Thee I lose myself; I cannot contain Thee, do Thou contain me. I believe in Thee, though I cannot comprehend Thee; do Thou increase my faith; I hope in Thee, for Thou art the source of all good; do Thou enliven my hope; I love Thee, because Thou art worthy of all love; do Thou



in flame ever more my love, that in Thy love I may live and die. Amen.



GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxviii. 18—20.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to His disciples: All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.



## 402 INSTRUCTION ON THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM.

EXPLANATION. Christ being God had from all eternity the same power that His Father had; being man, He had this same power by the union of His divinity with His humanity, and on account of the infinite merits of His passion. In virtue of this power, He said to His apostles, before the ascension, that, as His Heavenly Father had sent Him, even so He sent them to all nations, without exception, to teach all that He had commanded, and to receive them, by means of baptism, into the Church; at the same time He promised to be with them to the end of the world, that is, that He would console them in suffering, strengthen them in persecution, preserve them from error, and always protect them and their successors, the bishops and priests, even unto the consummation of the world.

*[See Instruction on the doctrine of the infallibility of the Church for the first Sunday after Easter.]*

ASPIRATION. Be with us, O Lord, for without Thee our pastors cannot produce fruit, nor their hearers profit anything from their words. Be with us always, for we always need Thy help. All power is given to Thee, Thou hast then the right to command, and we are bound to obey Thy commands which by Thy Church Thou hast made known to us. This we have promised in baptism, and now before Thee we renew those vows. Grant now that those promises which without Thee we could not have made, and without Thee cannot keep, may be fulfilled in our actions. Leave us not to ourselves, but be Thou with us, and make us obedient to Thee, that by cheerful submission to Thee we may receive happiness.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM.

*Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*  
(Matt. xxviii. 19.)

*Is baptism a Sacrament?*

**Y**ES, because in it the baptized person receives the grace of God by means of an external sign, instituted by Christ.



*What is this external sign?*

The immersion, or the pouring of water, accompanied by the words: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

*What does the baptismal grace effect?*

It removes original and actual sin, causing man to be spiritually born again, made a new creature, a child of God, and joint heir with Christ.

*How many kinds of baptism are there?*

There are three kinds: The baptism of desire, which consists in a heartfelt desire for the baptism of water, joined with a perfect love of God, or a perfect sorrow for sins committed, and with the purpose to obey all God's commands; the baptism of blood, which is received by those who suffer martyrdom for the true faith, without having received the baptism of water; the baptism of water, which is the Sacrament of Baptism.

*What do the different ceremonies of this Sacrament signify?*

They are the external signs of the effects which baptism produces inwardly upon the soul, and should impress us with deep reverence for this Sacrament.

*Why is it customary to have a godfather or godmother?*

That there may be a witness that the child has received baptism; that in case of the death of the parents, the sponsors may assume their place, and have the child instructed in the truths of religion. St. Augustine speaking of the duties of sponsors, very beautifully says: "They should use all care, often to admonish in true love their godchildren that they may strive to lead a pure life; they should warn them against all detraction, all improper songs, and keep them from pride, envy, anger, and revenge; they should watch over them that they may preserve the Catholic faith, attend the church services, listen to the word of God, and obey their parents and their pastors." Sponsors must therefore be true believers, and of unquestionable morality. No one, unless a Catholic can be chosen for a sponsor, because one who is not a Catholic would not instruct the child in the Catholic faith, or see that others do it, but would be more likely, as experience shows, to draw the child over to error.



*What results from this sponsorship?*

In baptism, as in confirmation, a spiritual affinity originates between the sponsors, the one who baptizes or confirms, with the one baptized or confirmed, and with the parents, so that, by a decision of the Church, a godfather or godmother cannot contract marriage with any of these parties, unless the impediment is removed by dispensation, that is, by a special permission received from a spiritual superior. But the sponsors have no spiritual relationship to each other.

*Why has the Church instituted this spiritual relation?*

From reverence for these holy Sacraments, and that by this spiritual bond the sponsors may be more closely connected with their godchildren, and be incited earnestly to discharge their obligation.

*Why must the person to be baptized wait at the entrance of the church?*

To indicate that until he has thrown off the yoke of sin, and submitted to Christ, and His authority, he is unworthy to enter, because baptism is the door of God's grace, to the kingdom of heaven, and the communion of saints.

*Why does the person receive a saint's name?*

That by this name he may be enrolled, through baptism, into the number of Christians whom St. Paul calls saints; that he may have a patron and intercessor, and that the saint, whose name he bears, may be his model and example, by which he may regulate his own life.

*Why does the priest breathe in the face of the one to be baptized?*

In imitation of Christ who breathed on His apostles when He gave them the Holy Ghost. (*John* xx. 22.) St. Chrysostom says that in baptism supernatural life is given to the soul as God imparted natural life to Adam by breathing on him.

*Why does the priest impose his hand so many times upon the head of the person to be baptized?*

To show that he is now the property of God and is under His protection.



*What do the many exorcisms signify?*

That the evil spirit who previous to baptism holds the person in bondage is now commanded in the name of God to depart, that a dwelling-place may be prepared for the Holy Ghost.

*Why is the person so often signed with the sign of the cross?*

To signify that through the power of Christ's merits and of His death on the cross, baptism washes away original sin; that the person is to be henceforth a follower of Christ the Crucified, and as such must fight valiantly under the banner of the cross, against the enemies of his salvation, and must follow Christ on the way of the cross, even unto death.

*What does the salt signify which is put into the person's mouth?*

It is an emblem of Christian wisdom and of preservation from the corruption of sin.

*Why are his ears and nose touched with spittle?*

That as Christ put spittle on the eyes of the man born blind, thus restoring his sight, so by baptism, the spiritual blindness of the soul is removed, and his mind receives light to behold heavenly wisdom. Also, as St. Ambrose says, the candidate is thus instructed to open his ears to priestly admonitions, and become a sweet odor of Christ.

*Why does the priest ask: "Dost thou renounce the devil, and all his works, and all his pomps?"*

That the Christian may know that his vocation requires him to renounce and combat the devil, his works, suggestions and pomps. Thus St. Ambrose very beautifully addresses a person just baptized: "When the priest asked: 'Dost thou renounce the devil and all his works,' what didst thou reply? 'I renounce them.' 'Dost thou renounce the world, its lusts and its pomps?' 'I renounce them.' Think of these promises, and let them never depart from thy mind. Thou hast given thy hand-writing to the priest, who stands for Christ; when thou hast given thy note to a man, thou art bound to him. Now thy word is not on earth, but preserved in heaven; say not thou knowest nothing of this promise; this exculpates thee no better than the excuse of a soldier who in time of battle should say he knew not that by becoming a soldier he would have to fight."



*Why is the person anointed on the shoulder and breast with holy oil?*

As SS. Ambrose and Chrysostom explain, this is done to strengthen him to fight bravely for Christ; as the combatants of old anointed themselves with oil before they entered the arena, so is he anointed, on the breast, that he may gain courage and force, bravely to combat the world, the flesh, and the devil, and on the shoulder, that he may be strong to bear constantly and untiringly the yoke of Christ's commands, and pursue the toilsome course of life in unwavering fidelity to God and His holy law.

*Why are the Lord's Prayer, and the Apostles' Creed said at baptism?*

That, when the child is a grown person an acknowledgment of faith may by this means be made in the face of the Church; when children are baptized, these prayers are said by the sponsors who are thus reminded to see that their godchildren are well instructed in these as in all other Christian truths.

*Why does the priest expressly ask the person if he will be baptized?*

Because as man, through Adam, of his own free will obeyed the devil, so now when he would be received among the number of Christ's children, he must, to obtain salvation, of his own free will obey the precepts of God.

*Why is water poured three times upon the person's head?*

This is done, as St. Gregory the Great writes, in token that man after this thrice-repeated ablution rises from the death of sin, as Christ, after His three days' burial, rose from the dead. (*Rom. vi. 4. 5.*) In early times the candidate for baptism was immersed three times in the water. For many reasons this custom has been abolished.

*Why is the person anointed on the top of the head with chrism?*

This anointing is, so to speak, the crown of the young Christian. As in the Old Law the kings were anointed, (*i Kings x. 1.*) as Jesus is the Anointed One, and as the Apostle St. Peter calls the Christians a chosen race, a kingly priesthood, a holy people, (*i Peter ii. 9.*) so the baptized by means of this unction is embodied in Christ,



the Anointed One, and participates in His priesthood and kingly dignity. What an exalted position is the Christian's! He is the anointed one of the Lord, and in a spiritual sense a priest, because he constantly brings himself to the Lord God as a pleasing sacrifice in prayer, mortification, &c. He is king when he rules over his inclinations, submits them to reason, and reason to the Lord. Besides this he is king by the claims which, through baptism, he possesses to the kingdom of heaven. Through the chrism he becomes the blessed temple of the Holy Ghost, the sacred vessel which in time, through communion, will contain the precious body and blood of Christ. How does he desecrate this temple, when, by grievous sin, he tramples this exalted dignity under his feet and stains the temple of the Holy Ghost, his soul!

*What does the white robe signify?*

The holy Fathers teach that this represents the glory to which by baptism we are born again; the purity and beauty with which the soul, having been washed from sin in the Sacrament of baptism, is adorned, and the innocence which the baptized should preserve through his whole life.

*Why is a lighted candle placed in his hand?*

It is an emblem of the Christian doctrine which preserves the baptized from the darkness of error, ignorance, and sin, illumines his understanding, and leads him safely in the way of virtue; it represents the flame of love for God and our neighbor which the baptized should henceforth continually carry, like the five prudent virgins, (*Matt. xxv. 13.*) on the path to meet the Lord, that when his life is ended he may be admitted to the eternal wedding feast; it signifies also the light of good example which he should keep ever burning.

*Who is the minister of this sacrament?*

The ordinary minister is the priest of the Church; but in case of necessity any layman or woman, even the father or mother can baptize. Parents, however, should not baptize their own child unless no other Catholic can be procured. The reason why lay persons are permitted to baptize is that no one may be deprived of salvation.

*What must be observed particularly in private baptism?*

The person who baptizes must be careful to use only natural water, which must be poured on the child's head



saying at the same time the words: I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; having at the same time the intention of baptizing as the Church does, in the manner required by Christ.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS.

**A**LL the graces and dignities which we receive in baptism, God secures to us for the future, only on condition that we keep our baptismal vows. Every Christian in baptism makes a bond with God through the meditation of Christ who has sealed it with His blood. This bond consists, on man's part, in the promise to renounce forever the devil, all his works and all his pomps, that is, constantly to suppress the threefold lust of the eyes, the flesh and the pride of life, by which the devil leads us to sin, and to believe all that God has revealed, and all that His holy Church proposes to our belief, and diligently and properly to make use of all the means of salvation. On the part of God this bond consists in cleansing us from all sin, in bestowing the gifts of the Holy Ghost, in adopting us as His children, and in the assurance to the inheritance of heaven. This bond will never be broken by God who is infinitely true and faithful, but it is often violated by weak and fickle man. In compliance with the desire of the Church we should often reflect upon it, and from time to time renew it in the sight of God. This should be done particularly before receiving the holy Sacrament of Confirmation, before first Communion, on the vigils of Easter and Pentecost, at the blessing of baptismal water, on the anniversaries of our baptism and confirmation, before making any solemn vow, before entering into matrimony and when in danger of death. This renewal of baptismal vows can be made in the following manner: Placing ourselves in the presence of God, we kneel down, fold our hands, and say with fervent devotion:

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was born and suffered for us.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.

I renounce the devil, all his works and all his pomps.

Christ Jesus! With Thee I am united, to Thee alone I cling, Thee only will I follow, for Thee I desire to live



and die. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

## DOCTRINE ON THE HOLY TRINITY.

### *What is God?*

**G**OD is the most perfect being, the highest, best Good, who exists from all eternity, by whom heaven and earth are created, and from whom all things derive and hold life and existence, for of Him, and by Him, and in Him are all things. (*Rom. xi. 36.*)

### *What is the Blessed Trinity?*

The Blessed Trinity is this one God who is one in nature and threefold in person, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

### *Is each of these three persons God?*

Yes, because each of them has the divine nature and substance.

### *Are they not three Gods?*

No, because all three of these persons have one and the same divine nature and substance.

### *Is any one of these three persons older, mightier, or greater than the other?*

By no means, they are all three from eternity entirely equal to each other in divine omnipotence, greatness and majesty, and must, therefore, be equally adored and venerated.

### *Ought one to give himself up to the investigation of the most Blessed Trinity?*

No; "For," says the saintly Bishop Martin, "the mystery of the Trinity cannot be comprehended by the human intellect, no one however eloquent can exhaust it; if entire books were written about it, so that the whole world were filled with them, yet the unspeakable wisdom of God would not be expressed. God who is indescribable, can in no way be described. When the human mind ceases to speak of Him, then it but begins to speak." Therefore the true Christian throws his intellect under the feet of faith, not seeking to understand that which the human mind can as little comprehend, as a tiny hole in the sand can contain the immeasurable sea. An humble and active faith will



make us worthy some day in the other world, to see with the greatest bliss this mystery as it is, for in this consists eternal life, that by a pious life we may glorify and know the only true God, Christ Jesus His Son, and the Holy Ghost.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

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**T**HE Introit of this day's Mass is an encouragement to confidence in God's mercy: Lord, I have trusted in thy mercy, my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation, I will sing to the Lord who giveth me good things. How long O Lord, wilt thou forget me unto the end? How long dost thou turn away thy face from me? (*Ps. xii.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** O God, the strength of those who hope in Thee: mercifully hear our supplication: and since mortal weakness can do nothing without Thee, grant us the assistance of Thy grace; that in observing Thy commandments, we may please Thee both in will and in deed. Thro'.

**EPISTLE.** (*John iv. 8—21.*) DEARLY BELOVED, God is charity. By this hath the charity of God appeared towards us, because God hath sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we may live by him. In this is charity: not as though we had loved God, but because he hath first loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins. My dearest, if God hath so loved us: we also ought to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abideth in us, and his charity is perfected in us. In this we know that we abide in him, and he in us: because he hath given us of his spirit. And we have seen, and do testify, that the Father hath sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God. And we



have known, and have believed the charity, which God hath to us. God is charity: and he that abideth in charity, abideth in God, and God in him. In this is the charity of God perfected in us, that we may have confidence in the day of judgment: because as he is, we also are in this world. Fear is not in charity: but perfect charity casteth our fear, because fear hath pain; and he that feareth, is not perfected in charity. Let us therefore love God, because God first hath loved us. If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not? And this commandment we have from God, that he, who loveth God, love also his brother.

EXPLANATION. There could not be adduced stronger motives for the love of God and our neighbor than these cited by St. John who, because of his ardent love of God, was named the "disciple of love." If we but reflect upon them, it is impossible to resist his words. We should be induced to love our neighbor by the love which God has for him, for whatever God loves is certainly worthy of our love; and we cannot love God when we do not love our neighbor. "Since your neighbor," says St. Augustine, "is your brother, and yet you do not love him, how can you love God whose commandment you thus reject?"

GOSPEL. (*Luke* vi. 36—41.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: Be ye merciful as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and you shall not be judged: condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you shall be forgiven. Give, and it shall be given to you: good measure and pressed down and shaken together and running over shall they give into your bosom. For with the same measure that you shall mete withal, it shall be measured to you again. And he spoke also to them a similitude: Can the blind lead the blind? do they not both fall into the ditch. The disciple is not above his master: but every one shall be perfect, if he be as his master.





And why seest thou the mote in thy brother's eye, but the beam that is in thy own eye thou considerest not? or how canst thou say to thy brother: Brother, let me pull the mote out of thy eye: when thou thyself seest not the beam in thy own eye? Hypocrite, cast first the beam out of thine own eye: and then shalt thou see clearly to take out the mote from thy brother's eye.

*Be ye merciful as your Father also is merciful!*

If we would be children of our Heavenly Father, we must imitate Him in mercy and goodness; as He lets His



sun shine on the good and the bad, and allows the dew of His grace to fall alike on the just and the unjust, even so must we not only love our friends, but also our enemies.

*Judge not, and you shall not be judged; condemn not, and you shall not be condemned!*

Two kinds of judgments are here forbidden by Christ: the rash or presumptuous judgment and the arrogant judgment. The rash judgment, which is usually a groundless suspicion, is forbidden, because by it the love and honor of our neighbor is injured, for no one can look into the heart and see the motive of another's omissions and commissions; of these no one but God can judge, who searches the heart and reins, and knows the intention. The arrogant judgment is that of one who judges another without any right, as if he were his superior. By both of these judgments man usurps the right of God, as St. Dorotheus says, takes vengeance from God, and robs himself of all divine protection. "A double, yes, a threefold sin it is," says St. Chrysostom, "to judge another, and without pity draw the beam from his eye."

*Forgive, and you shall be forgiven!*

By these words Christ teaches that we shall receive forgiveness from God for the sins we have committed against Him, only upon the condition that we from our hearts forgive others their injuries to us. "For" says St. Chrysostom "how canst thou raise thy hand to heaven, or move thy tongue to ask forgiveness, when thou wilt not forgive? When thou wishest that God would forgive thy sins, He will not do it, because thou hast an angry feeling towards thy brother."

*Give and it shall be given to you!*

We are poor and greatly need that God should give to us; and, therefore, like petitioners, we say every day: "Give us this day our daily bread." But God answers us: Give, and it shall be given to you. You are my poor and you have other poor among you; do you then to these as you would that I should do to you. The goodness and love of God should always be our model, although we can never reach it, for between our love and goodness, and the love and goodness of God, there is an infinite difference. For the little which we give to the poor, God gives us a good measure, pressed down, and shaken together,



and overflowing. The promise Give, and it shall be given to you applies also to all other works which we do for the love of God, for He rewards with graces and blessings upon this earth, and with eternal glory in heaven.

*Can the blind lead the blind?*

By these words the Saviour teaches that no one should rebuke, or reproach his neighbor for faults from which he himself is not free, that the reproach may not be required: Cast first the beam, that is, the great faults, out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to take the mote, that is, the small faults, out of thy brother's eye. The blind who leads another and falls into the ditch, is also he who is led by his carnal desires, and does not permit himself to be guided by the light of faith, and divine grace. This is the most dangerous and most fearful blindness, because it inevitably leads to destruction.

ASPIRATION. O that I had been always merciful to my neighbor that I might merit mercy from God! O that I had never rashly judged others that I might not be condemned! Ah, my God! I regret from my heart these wrongs, and hope for forgiveness from Thee, as I also from my heart forgive those who have offended me! Enlighten my blindness, O Lord, that I may guard against such sins in future, and not follow the desires of the flesh that I may find the right path to heaven, and by a good example lead others thither. Amen.

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## FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI.

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*Why is this day called Corpus Christi?*

**B**ECAUSE on this Thursday the Catholic Church celebrates the institution of the most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. The Latin term Corpus Christi signifies in English, Body of Christ.

*Who instituted this festival?*

Pope Urban IV. who, in the decree concerning it, gives the following explanation of the institution and grandeur



of this festival: "Although we daily, in the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, renew the memory of this holy Sacrament, we believe that we must, besides, solemnly commemorate it every year, to put the unbelievers to shame; and because we have been informed that God has revealed to some pious persons that this festival should be celebrated in the whole Church, we direct that on the first Thursday after the octave of Pentecost the faithful shall assemble in church, join with the priests in singing the word of God," &c. Hence this festival was instituted on account of the greatness of the divine mystery; the unbelief of those who denied the truth of this mystery; and the revelation made to some pious persons. This revelation was made to a nun at Liège, named Juliana, and to her devout friends Eve and Isabella. Juliana, when praying, had frequently a vision in which she saw the bright moon, with one part of it somewhat dark; at her request she received instructions from God that one of the grandest festivals was yet to be instituted: the festival of the most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. In 1246, she related this vision to Robert, Bishop of Liège, who after having investigated the matter with the aid of several men of learning and devotion, among whom was Jacob Pantaleon, Archdeacon of Liège, afterwards Pope Urban IV., made arrangements to introduce this festival in his diocese, but death prevented his intention being put into effect. After the bishop's death the Cardinal Legate Hugh undertook to carry out his directions, and celebrated the festival for the first time in the year 1247, in the Church of St. Martin at Liège. Several bishops followed this example, and the festival was observed in many dioceses, before Pope Urban IV. in 1264 finally ordered its celebration by the whole Church. This order was confirmed by Clement V. at the Council of Vienna in 1311, and the Thursday after the octave of Pentecost appointed for its celebration. In 1317, Pope John XXII. instituted the solemn procession.

*Why are there such grand processions on this day?*

For a public profession of our holy faith that Christ is really, truly and substantially present in this Blessed Sacrament; for a public reparation of all the injuries, irreverence, and offences, which have been and are committed by impious men against Christ in this Blessed Sacrament; for the solemn veneration and adoration due to the Son of God in this Sacrament; in thanksgiving for its institution, and for all the graces and advantages received therefrom; and finally, to draw down the divine blessing upon the people and the country.



*Had this procession a prototype in the Old Law?*

The procession in which was carried the Ark of the Covenant containing the manna, was a figure of this procession.

The Church sings at the Introit the words of David: He fed them with the fat of wheat, alleluia: and filled them with honey out of the rock. Allel. allel. allel. Rejoice to God our helper; sing aloud to the God of Jacob. (*Ps. lxxx.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who under a wonderful sacrament hast left us a memorial of Thy Passion; grant us, we beseech Thee, so to venerate the sacred mysteries of Thy body and blood, that we may ever feel within us the fruit of thy redemption. Who livest &c.

EPISTLE. (*i Cor. xi. 23—29.*) BRETHREN, I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke, and said: Take ye, and eat; this is my body which shall be delivered for you: this do for the commemoration of me. In like manner also the chalice, after he had supped, saying: This Chalice is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as often as you shall drink, for the commemoration of me. For as often as you shall eat this bread, and drink this chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord until he come. Therefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink of the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself: and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord.

GOSPEL. (*John vi. 56—59.*) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to the multitude of the Jews: My flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth





in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead. He that eateth this bread shall live forever.

*[The explanation of the epistle and gospel is contained in the following instruction.]*

The Jews, liberated by the powerful hand of God from Egyptian captivity, went on dry ground through the midst of the Red Sea, whose waters became the grave of



their pursuer, King Pharaoh, and his whole army. Having arrived in the desert called Sin they began to murmur against Moses and Aaron, their leaders, on account of the want of bread, and demanded to be led back to Egypt where there was plenty. The Lord God took pity on His people. In the evening He sent into their camp great flocks of quails, which the Jews caught and ate, and on the morning of the next day the ground was covered with white dew, and in the desert something fine, as if pounded in a mortar, looking like frost on the earth, which as soon as the Jews beheld, they exclaimed in surprise: "Man hu?" "What is that?" But Moses said to them: "This is bread which the Lord has given you." And they at once began to collect the food which was white, small as Coriander seed, and tasted like wheat-bread and honey, and was henceforth called man or manna. God gave them this manna every morning, for forty years, Sabbaths excepted, and the Jews lived upon it in the desert, until they came to the Promised Land. This manna is a figure of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar which contains all sweetness, and nourishes the soul of him who receives it with proper preparation, so that whoever eats it worthily, dies not, though his body sleeps in the grave, for Christ will raise him to eternal life.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR.

### *What is the Sacrament of the Altar?*

**I**T is that Sacrament in which under the appearance of bread and wine the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are really, truly and substantially present.

### *When and in what manner did Christ promise this Sacrament?*

About one year before its institution He promised it in the synagogue at Capharnaum, according to St. John the Evangelist: (vi. 24—65) When Jesus, near the Tiberian Sea, had fed five thousand men in a miraculous manner with a few small loaves, these men would not leave Him, because they marvelled at the miracle, were anxious for this bread, and desired to make Him their king. But Jesus fled to a high mountain, and in the night went with His disciples to Capharnaum which was a town on the opposite side of the sea; but a multitude of Jews followed Him, and He made use of the occasion to speak of the mysterious



bread which He would one day give them and all men. He first exhorted them not to go so eagerly after the perishable bread of the body, but to seek the bread of the soul which lasts forever, and which the Heavenly Father would give them, through Him, in abundance. This imperishable bread is the divine word, His holy doctrine, especially the doctrine that He had come from heaven to guide us to eternal life. (*vers.* 25—38.) The Jews murmured because He said that He had come from heaven, but the Saviour quieted them by showing that no one could believe without a special grace from His Heavenly Father (*v.* 43, 44) that He was the Messiah, and had come from heaven. After this introduction setting forth that the duty of faith in Him and in His divine doctrine was a spiritual nourishment, Christ very clearly unfolded the mystery of another bread for the soul which was to be given only at some future time, and this the Saviour did not ascribe to the Heavenly Father, as He did the bread of the divine word, but to Himself by plainly telling what this bread was: I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever, and the bread that I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world. (*v.* 51, 52.)

But the Jews would not believe these words, so clearly expressed, for they thought their fulfillment impossible, and said: How can this man give us his flesh to eat? (*v.* 53.) But Jesus recalled not His words, answered not the Jews' objections, but confirmed that which He had said, declaring with marked emphasis: Amen, amen, I say unto you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you. (*v.* 54.) He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up in the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed: and my blood is drink indeed; he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He that eateth this bread, shall live forever. (*v.* 55—59.) Jesus, therefore, said distinctly and plainly, that at a future time He would give His own Body and Blood as the true nourishment of the soul; besides, the Jews and the disciples alike received these words in their true, literal sense, and knew that Jesus did not here mention His Body and Blood in a figurative sense, but meant to give them His own real





Flesh and Blood for food; and it was because they believed it impossible for Jesus to do this, and because they supposed He would give them His dead flesh in a coarse, sensual manner, that the Jews murmured, and even several of His disciples said: This saying is hard, and who can hear it? But Jesus persisted in His words: My flesh is meat indeed, &c., and calls the attention of His disciples to another miracle: to His future ascension, which would be still more incredible, but would come to pass; and by the words: It is the spirit which quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing, the words that I have spoken to you, are spirit and life, (v. 64) He showed them that this mystery could be believed only by the light and grace of the Holy Spirit, and the partaking of His Body and



Blood would not be in a coarse, sensual manner but in a mysterious way. Notwithstanding this, many of His disciples still found the saying hard, and left Him, and went no longer with Him. (*v.* 67.) They found the saying hard, because, as our Saviour expressly said, they were lacking in faith. He let them go, and said to His apostles: Will you also go away? thereby showing that those who left Him, understood Him clearly enough, and that His words did contain something hard for the mind to believe. The apostles did not leave Him, they were too well assured of His divinity, and that to Him all was possible, as St. Peter clearly expresses: Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and have known that thou art Christ, the Son of God. (*v.* 69, 70.)

From the account given by St. John, it is plainly seen that Christ really promised to give us for our food His most precious Body and Blood, really and substantially, in a wonderful, mysterious manner, and that He did not speak figuratively of faith in Him, as those assert who condemn this most holy Sacrament. If Jesus had so meant it, He would have explained it thus to the Jews and to His disciples who took His words literally, and therefore could not comprehend, how Jesus could give His Flesh and Blood to them for their food. But Jesus persisted in His words, that His Flesh was truly food, and His Blood really drink. He even made it the strictest duty for man to eat His Flesh and drink His Blood; (*v.* 54) He shows the benefits arising from this nourishment of the soul, (*v.* 55) and the reason why this food is so necessary and useful. (*v.* 56.) When His disciples left Him, because it was a hard saying, He allowed them to go, for they would not believe His words, and could not believe them on account of their carnal manner of thinking. This holy mystery must be believed, and cannot be comprehended. Jesus has then promised, as the Catholic Church has always maintained and taught, that His Body and Blood would be present under the appearance of bread and wine in the Blessed Sacrament, a true nourishment for the soul, and that which He promised, He has really given.

*When and in what manner did Christ institute the most holy Sacrament of the Altar?*

At the Last Supper, on the day before His passion, after He had eaten with His apostles the paschal lamb, which was a prototype of this mystery. Three Evangelists,



Matthew, (xxvi. 26—29) Mark, (xiv. 22—25.) and Luke (xxii. 19—20) relate in few, but plain words, that on this evening Jesus took into His hand bread and the chalice, blessed and gave both to His disciples, saying: This is my body, that will be given for you; this is my blood, which will be shed for you and for many. Here took place in a miraculous manner, by the all-powerful word of Christ, the mysterious transformation; here Jesus gave Himself to His apostles for food, and instituted that most holy meal of love which the Church says contains all sweetness. That which three Evangelists plainly relate, St. Paul confirms in his first epistle to the Corinthians, (xi. 23—29. *See this day's epistle*) in which to his account of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament he adds: Whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, (that is, in a state of sin) shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord. . . . eateth and drinketh judgment to himself. (v. 27—29.)

From these words and those of the three holy Evangelists already mentioned, it is clear that Jesus really fulfilled His promise, really instituted the most holy Sacrament, and gave His most sacred Body and Blood to the apostles for their food. None of the Evangelists, nor St. Paul, informs us that Christ said: this will become my body, or, this signifies my body. All agree that our Saviour said *this is my body, this is my blood*, and they therefore decidedly mean us to understand that Christ's body and blood are really, truly, and substantially present under the appearance of bread and wine, as soon as the mysterious change has taken place. And this is confirmed by the words: *that is given for you; which shall be shed for you and for many; because Christ gave neither bread nor wine, nor a figure of His Body and Blood, for our redemption, but His real Body, and His real Blood, and St. Paul could not assert that we could eat the Body and Blood of the Lord unworthily, if under the appearance of bread and wine were present not the real Body and Blood of Christ, but only a figure of them, or if they were only bread and wine.* This is also proved by the universal faith of the Catholic Church, which in accordance with Scripture and the oldest, uninterrupted Apostolic traditions\* has al-

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\* Thus St. Ignatius, the Martyr, who was instructed by the apostles themselves, rebukes in these words those who even at that time would not believe in the change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of the Lord: "They do not believe that the real body of Jesus Christ our Redeemer who suffered for us and has risen from death is contained in the Sacrament of the Altar." (*Ep. ad Smyr.*) Thus St. Irenaeus who was a disciple of St. Poly-



ways believed and taught, that under the appearance of bread and wine the real Body and Blood of Christ are present, as the Ecumenical Council of Trent expressly declares: (*Sess. xiii. c. 1. can. 1. de sacros. Euchar.*) "All our ancestors who were of the Church of Christ, and have spoken of this most Blessed Sacrament, have in the plainest manner professed that our Redeemer instituted this wonderful Sacrament at the Last Supper, when, having blessed the bread and wine, He assured the apostles in the plainest and most exact words, that He was giving them His Body and Blood itself; and if any one denies that the holy Eucharist truly, really, and substantially contains the Body and Blood, the Soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, therefore the whole Christ, and asserts that it is only a sign or figure without virtue, let him be anathema."

*Did Christ institute this Sacrament for all time?*

Yes; for when He had promised that the bread which He would give, was His flesh for the life of the world, (*John. vi. 52.*) and had said expressly that whosoever did not eat His Flesh and drink His Blood would not have life in Him, He, at the Last Supper, by the words: Do this for a commemoration of me, (*Luke xxii. 19.*) gave to the apostles and their successors, the priests, the power in His name to change bread and wine into His Body and Blood, also to receive It and administer It as a food of the soul, which power the apostles and their successors, the priests, have always exercised, (*i Cor. x. 16.*) and will exercise to the end of the world.

*How long after the change does Christ remain present under the appearance of bread and wine?*

As long as the appearances remain; this was always the faith of the Church; therefore in the primitive ages when the persecutions were raging, after the sacrifice the sacred body of our Lord was taken home by the Christians

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carp, a pupil of St. John the Evangelist, writes: "Of the bread is made the body of Christ." (*Lib. IV. adv. haer.*) In the same manner St. Cyril: "Since Christ our Lord said of this bread, This is my body, who dares doubt it? Since He said, This is my blood, who dares to say, it is not His blood?" (*Lib. iv. regul. Cat.*) and in another place: "Bread and wine which before the invocation of the most Holy Trinity were only bread and wine, become after this invocation the body and blood of Christ." (*Cat. myrt. i.*)

What can the unbelievers say to this testimony? Do they know the truth better than those apostles who themselves saw and heard Jesus at the Last Supper, and who taught their disciples that which they had seen and heard? All Christian antiquity proves the error of these heretics.



to save the mystery from the pagans; at home they preserved It, and received It from their own hands, as affirmed by the holy Fathers of the Church Justin, Cyprian, Basil, and others. But when persecution had ceased, and the Church was permitted to profess the faith openly, and without hinderance, the Blessed Sacrament was preserved in the churches, enclosed in precious vessels, (ciborium, monstrance, or ostensorium) made for the purpose. In later times it was also exposed, on solemn occasions, for public adoration.

*Do we Catholics adore bread when we pay adoration to the Blessed Sacrament?*

No; we do not adore bread, for no bread is there, but the most sacred Body and Blood of Christ, and wherever Christ is adoration is due Him by man and angels. St. Augustine says: "No one partakes of this Body until he has first adored, and we not only do not sin when we adore It, but would sin if we did not adore It." The Council of Trent excommunicates those who assert that it is not allowable to adore Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, in the Blessed Sacrament. How unjust are those unbelievers who sneer at this adoration, when it has never entered into the mind of any Catholic to adore the external appearances of this Sacrament, but the Saviour hidden under the appearances; and how grievously do those indifferent Catholics sin who show Christ so little veneration in this Sacrament, and seldom adore Him if at all!

*Which are the external signs of this Sacrament?*

The form and appearance, or that which appears to our senses, as the figure, the color, and the taste, but the substance of the bread and wine is by consecration changed into the real Body and Blood of Christ, and only the appearance of bread and wine remains, and is observable to the senses.

*Where and by whom is this consecration effected?*

This consecration is effected on the altar during the holy Sacrifice of the Mass (therefore the name Sacrament of the Altar), when the priest in the name and by the power of Christ pronounces over the bread and wine the words which Christ Himself pronounced when He instituted this holy Sacrament. St. Ambrose writes: "At the moment that the Sacrament is to be accomplished, the priest no longer uses his own words, but Christ's words, therefore Christ's words complete the Sacrament."



*Is Christ present under each form?*

Christ is really and truly present under both forms, in Divinity and Humanity, Body and Soul, Flesh and Blood. That Jesus is thus present is clear from the words of St. Paul: Knowing that Christ rising again from the dead, dieth now no more. (*Rom. vi. 9.*) Because Christ dies no more, it naturally follows that He is wholly and entirely present under each form. Hence the council of Trent says: "Whoever denies that in the venerable Sacrament of the Eucharist the whole Christ is present in each of the forms and in each part of each form, where a separation has taken place, let him be anathema."

*Then no matter how many receive this Sacrament, does each receive Christ?*

Yes, for each of the apostles received Christ entirely, and if God by His omnipotence can cause each individual to rejoice at the same instant in the sun's light, and enjoy its entirety, and if He can make one and the same voice resound in the ears of all the listeners, is He not able to give the body of Christ, whole and entire, to as many as wish to receive It?

*Is it necessary that this Sacrament should be received in both forms?*

No, for as it has already been said, Christ is wholly present, Flesh and Blood, Humanity and Divinity, Body and Soul, in each of the forms. Christ promises eternal life to the recipient also of one form when He says: If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever, and the bread that I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world. (*John. vi. 52.*) The first Christians, in times of persecution, received this Sacrament only in the form of bread in their houses. Though in earlier times the faithful, like the priests, partook of the chalice, it was not strictly required, and the Church for important reasons has since ordered the reception of Communion under but one form, because there was danger that the blood of our Lord might be spilled, and thus dishonored; because as the Blessed Sacrament must always be ready for the sick, it was feared that the form of wine might be injured by long preservation; because many cannot endure the taste of wine; because in some countries there is scarcity of wine, and it can be obtained only at great cost and with much diffi-



culty, and finally, in order to refute the error of those who denied that Christ is entirely present under each form.

*Which are the effects of holy Communion?*

The graces of this most holy Sacrament are, as the Roman Catechism says, innumerable; it is the fountain of all grace, for it contains the Author of all the Sacraments, Christ our Lord, all goodness and perfection. According to the doctrine of the Church, there are six special effects of grace produced by this Sacrament in those who worthily receive it. It unites the recipient with Christ, which Christ plainly shows when He says: He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me and I in him; (*John* vi. 57.) hence the name Communion, of which St. Leo writes: "The participation of the Body and Blood of Christ transforms us into that which we receive," and from this union with Christ, our Head, arises also a closer union with our brethren in Christ, into one body. (*i Cor.* x. 17.) It preserves and increases sanctifying grace, which is the spiritual life of the soul, for our Saviour says: He that eateth me, the same also shall live by me. (*John* vi. 58.) It diminishes in us concupiscence and strengthens us against the temptations of the devil. St. Bernard says: "This holy Sacrament produces two effects in us, it diminishes gratification in venial sins, it removes the full consent in grievous sins; if any of you do not feel so often now the harsh emotion of anger, of envy, or impurity, you owe it to the Body and Blood of the Lord;" and St. Chrysostom: "When we communicate worthily we return from the table like fiery lions, terrible to the devils." It causes us to perform good works with strength and courage; for he who abides in Christ, and Christ in him, bears much fruit. (*John* xv.) It effaces venial sin, and preserves from mortal sin, as St. Ambrose says: "This daily bread is used as a help against daily weakness; and as by the enjoyment of this holy Sacrament, we are made in a special manner the property, the lambs of Christ, which He Himself nourishes with His own heart's blood, He does not permit us to be taken out of His hands, so long as we coöperate with His grace, by prayer, vigilance and contest. It brings us to a glorious resurrection and to eternal happiness; for he who communicates worthily, possesses Him who is the resurrection and the life, (*John* xi. 25.) who has said: He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up in the last day. (*John* vi. 55.) He has, therefore, in Christ a pledge, that he will rise in glory and



live for ever. If the receiving of this Sacrament produces such great results, how frequently and with what sincere desire should we hasten to enjoy this heavenly banquet, this fountain of all grace! The first Christians received it daily, and St. Augustine says: "Daily receive what daily benefits!" and St. Cyril: "The baptized may know that they remove themselves far from eternal life, when they remain a long time from Communion." Ah, whence comes in our days, the indifference, the weakness, the impiety of so many Christians but from the neglect and unworthy reception of Communion! Christian soul, close not your ears to the voice of Jesus who invites you so tenderly to His banquet: Come to me all you who are heavily laden and I will refresh you. Go often, very often to Him; but when you go to Him, do not neglect to prepare for His worthy reception, and you will soon feel its effects in your soul.

*In what does the worthy preparation for this holy Sacrament consist?*

The worthy preparation of the soul consists in purifying ourselves by a sincere confession from all grievous sins, and in approaching the holy table with profound humility, sincere love, and with fervent desire. He who receives holy Communion in the state of mortal sin draws down upon himself, as the apostle says, judgment and condemnation. The worthy preparation of the body consists in fasting from midnight before receiving Communion, and in coming properly dressed to the Lord's banquet.

The holy Sacrament of the Altar is preserved in the tabernacle, in front of which a light is burning day and night, to show that Christ, the light of the world, is here present, that we may bear in mind that every Christian congregation should contain in itself the light of faith, the flame of hope, the warmth of divine love, and the fire of true devotion, by a pious life manifesting and consuming itself, like a light, in the service of God. As a Christian you must believe that under the appearance of bread Christ is really present in the tabernacle, and that He is your Redeemer, your Saviour, your Lord and King, the best Friend and Lover of your soul, whose pleasure it is to dwell among the children of men; then it is your duty often to visit Him in this most holy Sacrament, and offer Him your homage and adoration. "It is certain," says St. Alphonsus Ligouri, "that next to the enjoyment of this holy Sacrament in Communion, the adoration of Jesus in this Sacrament is the best and most pleasing of all devotional



exercises, and of the greatest advantage to us." Hesitate not, therefore, to practise this devotion. From this day renounce at least a quarter of an hour's intercourse with others, and go to church to entertain yourself there with Christ. Know that the time which you spend in this way will be of the greatest consolation to you in the hour of death and through all eternity. Visit Jesus not only in the church, but also accompany and adore Him when carried in processions, or to sick persons. You will thus show your Lord the homage due to Him, gather great merits for yourself, and have the sure hope that Christ will one day repay you a hundredfold.

*NOTE. The Blessed Sacrament as a Sacrifice and the Holy Mass and its ceremonies, are treated upon towards the end of this book.*

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

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### ORIGIN OF THIS FESTIVAL.



AFTER many devout souls had venerated the Sacred Heart of Jesus, with sincere devotion, in the solitude of quiet life, as is seen in the lives of SS. Augustine, Bernard, Bonaventura, Thomas of Aquin, Francis de Sales, Ignatius, Clara, Gertrude, Mechtild, Catharine of Sienna, Theresa, and others, our divine Saviour willed that His heart's infinite love should be recognized by all men, and be kindled in cold hearts by a new fire of love. For this end He made use of a feeble, obscure instrument, that all the world might know that the devotion to His loving heart, previously almost entirely unknown, was His own work. This instrument, disregarded by the world, was one who shone before God in all the radiance of the most sublime virtues, the nun Margaret Alacoque of the order of the Visitation of Mary, at Paray, in Burgundy. In the year 1675, whilst she was one day in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, our Lord appeared to her, and pointing to His heart which He showed to her, surrounded with flames, surmounted by the cross, encircled with a crown of thorns, and pierced with a gaping wound, He said to her: "Behold this heart, which has loved mankind so much, and which receives only ingratitude and coldness in return for its love. My desire is that you should make reparation to my heart for



this ingratitude, and induce others also to make reparation." Our Lord then designated the Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi as the special day for this duty. In several subsequent apparitions our divine Lord repeated this injunction, and made the most unbounded promises in favor of all who would apply themselves to this office of reparation to His Sacred Heart. The following are some of His promises;

1. I will give them all the graces necessary for their state of life.

2. I will establish peace in their families.

3. I will console them in all their pains and trials.

4. I will be their assured refuge in life, and especially in death.

5. I will shed abundant blessings upon all their undertakings.

6. Sinners shall find in my Heart an infinite ocean of mercy.

7. Lukewarm souls will be rendered fervent.

8. Fervent souls shall rise rapidly to greater perfection.

9. I will bless those houses where the image of my heart shall be exposed and honored.

10. I will give to priests the gift of moving the hardest hearts.

11. Persons who propagate this devotion, shall have their names inscribed on my heart, never to be effaced from it.

Margaret obeyed, but found everywhere the greatest opposition, actual sneers and persecution, even from her Sisters in religion, until finally, with the aid of her divine spouse, she succeeded as mistress of novices, in bringing her young charges to the veneration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. But this did not content her zeal; although opposition continued, she strove to fulfil the command of Jesus, who assisted her by at last changing the hardened hearts of the nuns and inflaming them with the same love of His Sacred Heart. This devotion soon spread from the convent throughout the adjoining dioceses, where confraternities in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus arose, and Pope Clement XIII., after causing the strictest investigation to be made, commanded the Festival of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to be observed throughout the Catholic Church, on the first Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi.



## ON DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

### *I. Object of this Devotion.*

**B**Y the Sacred Heart of Jesus must be understood not the lifeless heart, separated from the body of Christ, but the tender, loving heart of the God-Man, the home of all His emotions, the fountain of all His virtues, and the most touching embodiment of His infinite love for man. The Catholic Church, in like manner, sets apart certain festivals with appropriate Mass and office, in honor of the cross, of our Lord's sacred blood and wounds that our devotion to the Redeemer may be rendered more fervent by the contemplation of these objects, for Jesus has shed His blood for us, has received wounds for us which He retained even after His resurrection, as eternal signs of His immense love for man, has taken them with Him to heaven, and will show them to us on the Judgment Day. How much more should our Saviour's Sacred Heart be the object of our devotion, since all the thoughts, sentiments, and emotions of this most loving heart aim only at our salvation, and since it is always ready to receive truly penitent sinners, to forgive them, again to turn His love to them, and make them sharers in eternal bliss.

Therefore the saints have from the first encouraged a tender devotion to this most Sacred Heart, as already mentioned. "Longinus," says St. Augustine, "opened the side of Jesus with His spear; in it I enter, and securely rest." "O how good," exclaims St. Bernard, "how lovely to take up my abode in this Heart! In this temple, in this sanctuary, before this ark of the covenant, I will adore and praise the name of the Lord, and say with the prophet: I have found in the heart of Jesus, my king, my brother, my friend." "Believe me, O blinded men," says St. Bonaventura, "if you knew how to enter by His sacred wounds into the interior of Jesus, you would there find not only a wonderful sweetness for your soul, but even sweet repose for your body. And if even the body there finds rest, how great, think you, must be the sweetness which the spirit there enjoys, if through these wounds we become united to the Sacred Heart of Jesus!" And St. Peter Damian says: "In this adorable heart we find the weapons with which to defend ourselves against our enemies, a cure for our ills, powerful help against temptations, the sweetest consolation in suffering, and the purest joy in this valley of tears."



St. Mechtild and St. Gertrude found themselves transported in an especial manner by the tenderness of this adorable heart, to adore it fervently, and Gertrude, enlightened by the Spirit of God, spoke these prophetic words: "The Lord retained until these late centuries the devotion to His Sacred Heart, as a last effort of His divine love." We have already seen how these words have been verified in the pious Margaret. O would that Jesus' great desire that all men might know and love His Sacred Heart be accomplished!

## *II. Excellence of this Devotion.*

It is, says the venerable P. Simon Gourdan:

1. The most sacred devotion, for by it man venerates the holiest sentiments and emotions of the Heart of Jesus, by which He has sanctified the Church, glorified His Heavenly Father, and presented Himself to us as the perfect model of the most exalted sanctity.

2. The oldest devotion of the holy Church, which, instructed by the great St. Paul, has at all times recognized the munificence of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

3. The most approved devotion, for the holy Scriptures everywhere exhort us, to renew our heart by changing our lives, rendering them contrite by true penance, inflaming them with the fire of divine love, and adorning them by the exercise of all virtue. Therefore a new heart is promised on which to remodel our Heart. That Heart can be no other than the Heart of Jesus, which is given us as an example of all virtue, and which we must imitate if we wish to be saved.

4. The most perfect devotion, for it is the source of all other devotions; the Heart of Jesus is that inexhaustible treasury from which the Mother of God and all the saints have drawn their graces, their life, their virtues, and all spiritual blessings. Filled from this treasury, other servants of God have instituted different devotions.

5. The most useful devotion, for in it we have the Fountain of Life itself before our eyes, from which we can draw directly, and increase in all virtue by adoring this divine Heart, meditating on its holy desires, and seeking to imitate it.

6. The devotion most pleasing to Christ, for by it we honor God, as Christ requires, in spirit and in truth, because we adore the interior power of God, seeking to please His heart.

7. Finally; the most necessary devotion, for its object is that we become intimately connected as members with Jesus, our Head, that we live by and according to His spirit, and have only one heart and soul with Christ.



Because this devotion is of such importance, we cannot sufficiently recommend it to all who are anxious for their soul's salvation. Every person may cherish this devotion, and venerate the Heart of Jesus by himself, but there is a greater blessing when pious souls make the devotion in a confraternity. In the year 1726 there existed more than three hundred such confraternities, and they are now spread throughout all Catholic countries. Do not delay then, O Christian soul, to practise this devotion, uniting with others to honor the divine Heart of Jesus, because in this most Blessed Heart all men find their reconciliation, the pious their assurance, sinners their hope, the oppressed their comfort, the sick their relief, those who are fighting their strength, the dying their refuge and the elect their joy and bliss.

The Introit of this day's Mass reads: He will have mercy according to the multitude of his mercies: for he hath not willingly afflicted nor cast off the children of men: the Lord is good to them that hope in him, to the soul that seeketh him. Allel. allel. (*Lament.* iii. 32. 33. 25.) The mercies of the Lord I will sing for ever: to generation and generation. (*Ps.* lxxxviii. 1.) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that we who, glorying in the most Sacred Heart of Thy beloved Son, celebrate the singular benefits of His love toward us, may rejoice equally in their operation and their fruit. Through the same &c.

LESSON. (*Isai.* xii. 1—6.) I will give thanks to thee, O Lord, for thou wast angry with me; thy wrath is turned away, and thou hast comforted me. Behold God is my Saviour, I will deal confidently, and will not fear: because the Lord is my strength and my praise, and he is become my salvation. You shall draw waters with joy out of the Saviour's fountains: and you shall say in that day: Praise ye the Lord, and call upon his name: make his works known among the people: remember that his name is high. Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath done great things: show this forth in all the earth. Rejoice, and praise, O



thou habitation of Sion: for great is he that is in the midst of thee, the Holy One of Israel.

EXPLANATION. This lesson is a hymn of praise for the deliverance of the Jews from the hands of their enemies, and at the same time a prophecy of the coming redemption of mankind from sin and death through Christ. Man will then draw waters with joy, says the prophet, from the Saviour's fountains. These fountains are the graces which Jesus has gained for us on the cross, but especially, as St. Augustine says, the holy Sacraments of Baptism and Communion. We should rejoice on account of these graces, particularly that the Holy One of Israel, Christ, the Son of God, dwells in the midst of Sion, that is, in the Catholic Church, in the Blessed Sacrament, to remain there to the end of the world. — Oh! let us often approach this ever-flowing fountain of all grace, the holy Eucharist, and let us draw with confidence, consolation, help, and strength from this fountain of love.

GOSPEL. (*John* xix. 31—35.) AT THAT TIME, The Jews (because it was the parasceve), that the bodies might not remain upon the cross on the sabbath-day (for that was a great sabbath-day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. The soldiers, therefore, came, and they broke the legs of the first, and of the other that was crucified with him. But after they were come to Jesus, when they saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers with a spear opened his side, and immediately there came out blood and water. And he that saw it hath given testimony: and his testimony is true.

EXPLANATION. According to the Jewish law a criminal could not be put to death, nor could the body of one who had been executed, remain in the place of execution, on the Sabbath day; it was for this reason that the Jews asked Pilate, the governor, to have the Body of Christ and those of the two thieves buried. Before this could be done, the bones of the crucified, according to the Roman law, had to be broken with iron clubs. The soldiers did so to the two thieves, who were yet alive; when they came to Jesus and found Him dead, they did not break His



bones, but one of them, Longinus, opened the Saviour's side with a spear, as was foretold by the prophet.

Jesus permitted His most Sacred Heart to be opened to atone for and efface those sins of men which originate in the heart, as Christ Himself says: (*Matt. xv. 19.*) From the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies; also to show us the infinite love with which He has loved us from the beginning, so that He even shed the last drop of His heart's blood for our salvation; to make, as it were, a place of refuge in His heart for us, as St. Augustine says: "The Evangelist is very careful in his expression; he does not say, the soldiers pierced or wounded His side, but he opened it, as if to open for us the door of life, from which flow the Sacraments of the Church, without which there can be no access to the true life." As often, then, as a temptation arises, or trouble depresses us, let us take refuge in that abode, and dwell there, until the tempest is over; as says the prophet; (*Is. ii. 10.*) Enter thou into the rock, and hide thee in the pit. Who is the rock but Christ, and what is the pit but His wound?

### AN ACT OF RESIGNATION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

*[An indulgence of one hundred days is gained by saying this prayer with true contrition, before a picture of the sacred heart of Jesus, and a plenary indulgence by saying it every day for a month, and receiving the Sacraments of Penance and Communion, and praying for the Church.]*

O Jesus, most worthy of love! I gratefully offer Thee my heart in compensation for my great unfaithfulness, and consecrate myself wholly and forever to Thy service, purposing, with Thy grace, no more to offend Thee. Amen.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



INTROIT: The Lord became my protector, and He brought me forth into a large place: He saved me, because he was well pleased with me. (*Ps. xvii.*) I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength: the Lord is my firmament, and my refuge, and my deliverer. Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Make us, O Lord, to have a perpetual fear and love of Thy holy name; for Thou never failest to help and govern those whom Thou dost establish in Thy steadfast love. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*i John iii. 13—18.*) DEARLY BELOVED, Wonder not if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not, abideth in death; whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. And you know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in himself. In this we have known the charity of God, because he hath laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. He that hath the substance of this world, and shall see his brother in need, and shut up his bowels from him, how doth the charity of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

EXPLANATION. People who are really pious have always something to suffer from the wicked world, as Jesus foretold, but they do not cease to love their persecutors as their best friends, and are ready, if necessary, to give their life for their enemies, as Christ did. Thus should all Christians act; for the love of our neighbor and even of our enemies is a universal command, a law that binds all; it is the life of the soul. Hatred deprives the soul of this life and makes man a murderer, because hatred is the beginning of murder, and often ends in homicide. By love



we know the true Christians. (*John*. xiii. 35.) St. John even considers love the certain sign of being chosen for eternal life, when he says: We know, we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. Alas! how few will be chosen from among the Christians of to-day, because there is so little love among them! Empty compliments, assurances of friendship, &c. love appears only in words, only on the tongue, and such idle, ephemeral, worthless love is found everywhere in this world; but that which is love in truth and reality, which shows charity to the suffering, how rare it is! and yet only to this love is promised eternal life, because it alone rests on the love of God.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xiv. 16—24.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke to the Pharisees this parable: A certain man made a great supper, and invited many. And he sent his servant, at the hour of supper, to say to them that were invited, that they should come, for now all things are ready. And they began all at once to make excuse. The first said to him: I have bought a farm, and I must needs go out, and see it; I pray thee hold me excused. And another said: I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to try them; I pray thee hold me excused. And another said: I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. And the servant returning, told these things to his lord. Then the master of the house being angry, said to his servant: Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the feeble, and the blind, and the lame. And the servant said: Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the Lord said to the servant: Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. But I say unto you, that none of these men that were invited shall taste of my supper.

*What is to be understood by this great supper?*

The Church of Christ on earth, in which His doctrine and His most precious Flesh and Blood are given as food





to those who belong to her; also the Church triumphant in heaven, in which God Himself, in the beatific vision, is the nourishment. This supper is called great, because God Himself has founded the Church; because the Church embraces heaven and earth, hence many belong and will belong to her; and because having ended the contest on earth, she will last forever in heaven. There the saints of God will enjoy the Highest Good for all eternity, and will have nothing to wish for, since all their desires will there be realized. O, what happiness it is that we are invited to His supper, and as guests are nourished by the teachings of Christ, and by His most sacred Flesh and Blood.



*Who is it that prepares the supper?*

It is Christ, the God-Man, who for our benefit has not only instituted His Church to which He has **entrusted His** doctrine and the Sacrament of His Flesh and Blood, but has gained eternal salvation for us by His passion and death, and who has invited us first by the prophets, who foretold Him and His divine kingdom, and afterwards by His apostles, and their successors to His great supper.

*Who are they who excuse themselves?*

They are principally the Jews who bound by pride and avarice to earthly possessions, and blinded by the pleasures of the world, did not recognize Jesus, and remained outside of His church. By him who said he had bought a farm are understood those who by constant anxieties about the possession of earthly goods, and the riches of this world, become indifferent to eternal salvation. By him who had bought five yoke of oxen, is to be understood that sort of busy men who are so burdened with worldly affairs that they find no time to work for heaven, for they even appropriate Sundays and festivals to their worldly affairs. By him who had taken a wife, and could not come, are represented the carnal, impure men who have rendered themselves by their lusts incapable of spiritual and heavenly joys. Since these different classes of people do not wish to have part in the heavenly banquet, God has excluded them and called others.

*Who are meant by the poor, the feeble, the blind and the lame?*

The humble and submissive Jews, the publicans, also the Samaritans and the Gentiles, who did not reject Jesus and His doctrine as did the proud, high-minded, carnal Scribes and Pharisees to whom Jesus spoke this parable. The former faithfully received Him, entered His Church, and became participators in eternal happiness. This is daily repeated, because God excludes from the kingdom of heaven those proud, avaricious, and carnal Christians who are ever invited by His servants, the priests, to the enjoyment of holy Communion, but who reject the invitation. On the contrary God welcomes the poor, despised people, the penitent sinners, by separating them from the love of the world by the inspiration of His grace, and by the adversities which He sends them. Thus, in a measure, He forces them to take part in the spiritual joys of a sincerely pious life in His Church on earth, and in the heavenly bliss of His Church in heaven.



SUPPLICATION. I thank Thee, O most merciful Jesus that Thou hast called me into Thy Church, permitting me so often to share in the banquet of Thy love, and that by Thy sufferings and death Thou hast obtained the joys of heaven for me. Urge me as seems pleasing to Thee, compel me by temporal trials that by the use of these graces I may obtain the place which Thou hast prepared for me in heaven.

### MORAL LESSONS CONCERNING THE VICE OF IMPURITY.

*I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.*  
(*Luke xiv. 29.*)

**F**ROM this foolish excuse it would seem as if married life were an obstacle to arriving at the heavenly banquet, whereas lawful, chaste, Christian marriage is, on the contrary, a means of eternal salvation for those to whom the gift of continency is not given. The excuse of this married man was not grounded on his station in life, but on his inordinate inclination for carnal pleasures which render the one who gives way to it, unfit for spiritual or heavenly things, for the sensual man perceiveth not the things that are of the Spirit of God. (*i Cor. ii. 14.*)

Unfortunate indeed are they who suffer themselves to be carried away by their sensual lusts, who give away the priceless jewel of chastity and purity of heart which makes man equal to the angels, (*Matt. xxii. 30.*) who for a momentary enjoyment of sinful pleasure lose that white and precious garment in which chaste souls will shine for ever in heaven before the face of God! What benefit does the impure man derive from the gratification of vile lust? He gains the anger and contempt of God; intolerable disgust when the sin is consummated; the torment of a remorseful conscience, and unless he repent, the eternal torments of hell, for the apostle says: Do not err: neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor the effeminate shall possess the kingdom of God. (*i Cor. vi. 9, 10.*) It is seen from the examples of the Old Law, how much God hates and abominates the sins of impurity. Why did God regret having created man? (*Gen. vi. 6.*) Why did He destroy all except a very few, by a universal deluge? (*Gen. vi. 17.*) Why did He lay the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha in ashes by pouring upon them fire and brimstone? (*Gen. xix.*) Why



did He punish the two brothers Her and Onan, by a sudden death? (*Gen.* xxxviii. 7. 10.) Why did He permit the whole tribe of Benjamin to be extirpated? (*Judges* xx.) Because of their detestable sins of impurity. And is not this vice an object of the just wrath of God? By these sins an impure man disgraces his body which should be a member of Christ, a temple of the Holy Ghost; he disgraces his soul the image of God, purified and purchased by the precious blood of Christ, and lowers himself beneath the animal, which, void of intellect, follows its instinct; he weakens the power of his body and soul, and ruins his health; he loses the respect of the good, scandalizes his fellowmen, voluntarily separates himself from the communion of saints, deprives himself of the sanctifying grace of God and participation in the merits of Jesus and His saints, and, if he continues like an animal to wallow in this vice, he finally falls into such blindness and hardness of heart that eternal truths, death, judgment, hell, and eternity no longer make any impression upon him; the most abominable crimes of impurity he considers as trifles, as human weaknesses, no sin at all. He is therefore but seldom, if ever, converted, because the evil habit has become his second nature, which he can no longer overcome without an extraordinary grace from God. This God seldom gives, because the impure man generally despises ordinary means and graces, and therefore despairs and casts himself into the pool of eternal fire, where the worm dies not, and where with Satan and his angels the impure shall be for ever tormented.

Do not suffer yourself to be deceived, Christian soul, by the words "love and friendship", which is sought to cover this vice and make it appear a weakness clinging to man. This impure love is a fire which has its origin in hell, and there it will eternally torment the bodies in which it has prevailed. That which God so much detests and so severely punishes, certainly cannot be a trifle, a human weakness! Impress deeply on your heart that all impure thoughts, desires and looks, to which you consent, all impure words, songs, exposures, touches, jokes, and such things, are great sins which exclude you from the kingdom of heaven, into which nothing defiled can enter. Remember that he who looks at a woman with a lustful desire, has already, as Christ says, committed adultery in his heart. (*Matt.* v. 28.) We must, then, carefully guard against "such trifles", as the wicked world calls them, if we do not wish to expose ourselves to the greatest danger of losing our souls. Although it is difficult for an impure person to be converted, yet he should not despair. God does not cast away even



the greatest sinner; Jesus forgave the adulteress in the temple, and forgave and received Mary Magdalen. But he who wishes to repent must make use of the proper means to regain the grace of God, and prevent a relapse. Those who have not defiled themselves by the sin of impurity can make use of the following means:

1. Constant prayer. Hence the admonition of the wise King; As I knew that I could not otherwise be continent, except God gave it, I went to the Lord and besought him. (*Wisd.* viii. 21.) 2. Mortification of the flesh by fasting and abstinence. Jesus says these impure spirits can in no other way be cast out but by prayer and fasting. (*Matt.* xvii. 20.) 3. The frequent meditation on the four last things, and on the bitter sufferings of our Lord; for there is, says St. Augustine, no means more powerful and effective against the heat of lust than reflection on the ignominious death of the Redeemer. 4. The quiet consideration of the temporal and eternal evils which follow from this vice, as already described. 5. The love and veneration of the Blessed Virgin who is the mother of beautiful love, the refuge of all sinners, of whom St. Bernard says: "No one has ever invoked her in his necessity without being heard." 6. The careful mortification of the eyes. The pious Job made a covenant with his eyes, that he would not so much as look upon a virgin. (*Job* xxxi. 1.) 7. The avoidance of evil occasions, especially intercourse with persons of the other sex. "Remember," says St. Jerome, "that a woman drove out the inhabitants of paradise, and that you are not holier than David, stronger than Samson, wiser than Solomon, who all fell by evil intercourse." 8. The avoidance of idleness: for idleness, says the proverb, is the beginning of all evil. 9. The immediate banishing of all bad thoughts by often pronouncing the names of Jesus and Mary, which, as St. Alphonsus Ligouri says, have the special power of driving away impure thoughts. 10. The frequent use of the holy Sacraments of Penance and of the Altar. This last remedy in particular is a certain cure if we make known to our confessor our weaknesses, and use the remedies he prescribes. The Scripture says that frequent Communion is the seed from which virgins spring, and the table which God has prepared against all temptations that annoy us.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Inflame, O Lord, our loins and hearts with the fire of Thy Holy Spirit,



that we may serve Thee with pure bodies, and please Thee with clean hearts. Amen.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



At the Introit of the Mass the Church calls upon all to invoke our Lord: Look Thou upon me, and have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am alone and poor. See my abjection and my labor, and forgive me all my sins, O my God. (*Ps. xxiv.*) To Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul. In Thee, O my God, I put my trust, let me not be ashamed. Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, the protector of them that hope in Thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: multiply Thy mercy upon us, that, guided and directed by Thee, we may so pass amid temporal goods as not to lose the eternal. Through &c.

EPISTLE. (*i Pet. v. 6—11.*) DEARLY BELOVED, Be you humbled under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in the time of visitation: casting all your care upon him, for he hath care of you. Be sober and watch: because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist ye, strong in faith: knowing that the same affliction befalls your brethren who are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little, will himself perfect you and confirm you and establish you. To him be glory and empire for ever and ever. Amen.

EXPLANATION. In this lesson St. Peter teaches that if we would be exalted we must humble ourselves under



the mighty hand of God. This necessary humility shows itself in us by giving ourselves and all our cares up to the providence of God who, as St. Augustine says, provides for one as for all. We should not fail, however, to be sober and circumspect, and not think ourselves secure from the lusts of the world. The devil like a lion seeking prey, desires the ruin of our souls, tormenting us by temptations and afflictions. By confidence in God's help we can and should resist him, especially when we consider that after the trials of this life the crown of glory will be our portion for all eternity.

## ON DRUNKENNESS.

*Be sober and watch. (i Peter, v. 8.)*

**S**OBRIETY is the mother of vigilance; intemperance is the mother of sloth and of numberless other vices which cast many souls into the jaws of the devil who, like a hungry lion, goes about day and night seeking for prey. Woe, therefore, to those who because of their drunkenness live, as it were, in constant night and in the perpetual sleep of sin! How will they feel when, suddenly awakened by death, they find themselves before the judgment-seat of God burdened with innumerable sins of which they were unconscious, or of which they wished not to know they were guilty! Who can number the sins committed in a state of intoxication, sins for which the drunkard cares nothing, for which he has no contrition, and has not confessed, because the light of reason is extinguished, his life is a senseless stupor, and he is therefore unconscious of his thoughts, words and actions.

But will the divine Judge find no sin in such persons? Will He permit the shameful deeds committed while intoxicated, the curses, blasphemies, sneers, detractions, outrages, and scandals to remain unpunished? He who demands an account of every idle word, will He demand no account of the time so badly spent, of the money so uselessly squandered, families neglected, church service unattended, education of children omitted, and the other great sins committed? They will indeed excuse themselves, pleading that these sins were committed involuntarily, or as a joke, when they were intoxicated; that their intoxication was excusable, as they were not able to stand much; but will God be content with such excuses? Will they not add to their damnation? That they took more than they could bear of the intoxicating drink, deprived themselves of the use of reason, and thus voluntarily caused all the sins they committed while in that state, is what will be punished.



What then can they expect? Nothing less than the fate of the rich man spoken of in the gospel, who on account of his debaucheries was buried in hell, where during all eternity his parched tongue was not cooled by one drop of water. (*Luke* xvi. 22.) Yes, this will be the place of those unconverted drunkards of whom St. Paul says that they will not possess the kingdom of God. (i *Cor.* vi. 10.) How rare and how difficult is the conversion of a drunkard, because with him as with the unchaste this habit becomes a second nature, and because he generally abuses the remedies: the holy Sacraments of Penance and the Altar.

This should certainly deter any one from the vice of drunkenness; but those who are not thus withheld, may consider the indecency, the disgrace, and the injury of this vice, for it ruins the body as well as the soul.

Is it not disgraceful that man endowed with reason, and created for heaven, should drown that reason in excessive drink, degrading his mind, his intellectual spirit, the image of God, rendering it like the brute animals, and even lower than the beasts. "Are not the drunkards far worse than the animals?" says St. Chrysostom. Yes, not only on account of their drunkenness, but far more so because of the shameful position of their body, their manners, their speech, their behavior. How disgracefully naked lay Noah, although he was intoxicated not through his own fault, exposed in his tent to the ridicule of the impudent Cham! (*Gen.* ix. 21.) Even the heathen Spartans considered the vice of drunkenness so disgraceful that they were in the habit of intoxicating a slave, and bringing him before their children that they might be disgusted with such a state.

Finally, that which should deter everybody from this vice is its injuriousness. It ruins the body as well as the soul. By surfeiting many have perished, (*Ecclus.* xxxvii. 34.) and it has ruined the health of many more. Who hath woe? whose father hath woe? who hath contentions? who fall into pits, who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? Surely they that pass their time in wine, and study to drink off their cups? (*Prov.* xxiii. 29. 30.) Daily observation confirms this truth of Scripture, and the miserable old age, accompanied by innumerable weaknesses and frailties of one addicted to drink is a sufficient testimony of the injuriousness of this vice.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xv. 1—10.) AT THAT TIME, The publicans and sinners drew nigh unto Jesus to hear him. And the Pharisees and Scribes murmured, say-





ing: This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them And he spoke to them this parable, saying: What man of you that hath an hundred sheep, and if he shall lose one of them, doth he not leave the ninety-nine in the desert, and go after that which was lost until he find it? And when he hath found it, lay it upon his shoulders rejoicing: and coming home, call together his friends and neighbors, saying to them: Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost? I say to you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, more



than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance. Or what woman having ten groats, if she lose one groat, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently until she find it? And when she hath found it, call together her friends and neighbors, saying: Rejoice with me, because I have found the groat, which I had lost? So I say to you, there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance.

*What moved the sinners to approach Jesus?*

The goodness and benevolence with which He met the penitent sinners. Do you also humbly and trustingly approach Him, and you may rest assured that, even if you are the greatest of sinners, you will receive grace and forgiveness.

*What is Christ's meaning in the parable of the lost sheep and groat?*

He expresses by this His desire for the salvation of the sinner, His joy and that of all heaven when a sinner is converted. Moreover, He shows the Pharisees, who in vain self-righteousness avoided all intercourse with acknowledged sinners, and who murmured at the goodness of Jesus, that the sinner, being truly unhappy, deserves our compassion rather than our anger.

*Why do the angels rejoice more over one sinner who does penance than over ninety-nine just?*

Because the places of the fallen angels are thus refilled; because the angels see how the good God rejoices; because they find their prayers for the conversion of sinners granted, as St. Bernard says: "The tears of the penitents are wine for the angels;" because, as St. Gregory says, "the true penitents are usually more zealous than the innocent."

ASPIRATION. I have erred like a sheep that has lost its way; but I thank Thee, O Jesus, my good Shepherd, that Thou hast so carefully sought me by Thy inspirations, admonitions and warnings, and dost now bring me back to true penance, that I may be a joy to the angels. Amen.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



THE Introit of the Mass is: The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the protector of my life: of whom shall I be afraid? My enemies that trouble me have themselves been weakened and have fallen. If armies in camp should stand together against me, my heart shall not fear. (*Ps. xxvi. 1—3.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that both the course of the world may be peaceably ordered for us by Thy governance, and that Thy Church may rejoice in tranquil devotion. Through &c.

EPISTLE. (*Rom. viii. 18—23.*) BRETHREN, The sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared to the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us. For the expectation of the creature waiteth for the revelation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him that made it subject, in hope: because the creature also itself shall be delivered from the servitude of corruption, into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that every creature groaneth, and travaileth in pain, even till now. And not only it, but ourselves also, who have the first-fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption of the sons of God, the redemption of our body: in Jesus Christ our Lord.

INSTRUCTION. There is no greater consolation under crosses and afflictions, no more powerful support in the adversities of a pious and virtuous life, than the thought that all sufferings are as nothing when compared with the coming glory of heaven, and that by a slight and momentary suffering in this life is obtained a superabundant hap-



piness in the next. (ii *Cor.* iv. 17.) Thus St. Augustine says: "Were we daily to suffer all torments, even for a short time the pains of hell, in order to see Christ and be numbered among His saints, would it not be worth all this misery to obtain so great a good, so great a glory?"

ASPIRATION. Ah Lord, when shall we be delivered from the miserable bondage of this life, and participate in that indescribable glory which Thou hast prepared for Thy children, where free from the misery and many temptations of this life, they enjoy eternal bliss. Enable us to see more and more into the misery of this life that we may thus be urged to strive for freedom and glory in Thy kingdom. Amen.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* v. 1—11.) AT THAT TIME, When the multitude pressed upon Jesus, to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Genesareth. And he saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets; and going up into one of the ships that was Simon's, he desired him to draw back a little from the land. And sitting, he taught the multitudes out of the ship. Now when he had ceased to speak, he said to Simon: Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon, answering, said to him: Master, we have labored all the night, and have taken nothing, but at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had done this, they enclosed a very great multitude of fishes: and their net broke. And they beckoned to their partners that were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came and filled both the ships, so that they were almost sinking. Which when Simon Peter saw, he fell down at Jesus's knees, saying: Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was wholly astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of fishes which they had taken; and so were also James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were





Simon's partners. And Jesus saith to Simon: Fear not: from henceforth thou shalt catch men. And having brought their ships to land, leaving all things, they followed him.

*What are we to learn from the people who came to Christ to hear the word of God?*

We should listen with great zeal to the word of God, because from it man receives the life of the soul, (*Matt. iv. 4.*) and eternal happiness. (*Luke xi. 28.*)

*Why did Christ teach from Peter's ship?*

By this He showed that the true doctrine is preached only from that Church of which Peter is the head, (*John.*



xxi. 15.) which is here represented by his ship. Amid storms of persecution Jesus has preserved and will preserve this ship, His Church, until the end of time. (*Matt.* xvi. 18). Peter still guides the bark in the unbroken line of his successors, and Jesus still teaches from this ship the same doctrine through the bishops and priests, as His coöperators, with whom He has promised to remain to the end of the world. (*Matt.* xxviii. 20.)

*Why was it that Peter and his assistants took in such a draught of fishes after they had labored all night in vain?*

Because at first they trusted in themselves, and did not throw out their nets in the name of the Lord, relying on His blessing and assistance. "This example," says St. Ambrose, "proves how vain and fruitless is presumptuous confidence, and how powerful, on the contrary, is humility, since those who had previously labored without success, filled their nets at the word of the Redeemer." Let us learn from this our inability, that we begin our work only with God, that is, with confidence in His help, and with the intention of working only for love of Him, and for His honor. If we do this, the blessing of the Lord will not be wanting.

*What is represented by the nets and the draught of fishes?*

"The word of truth which, so to speak, forms the net-work of gospel preaching," says St. Ambrose, "with which the successors of the apostles, the bishops and priests, draw souls from the darkness of error to the light of truth, and from the depths of the abyss to raise them to heaven."

*What is meant by the apostles' calling to their partners for help?*

We are instructed by this that we should assist the preachers of the gospel, the priests, in the conversion of sinners, by prayer, fasting, alms-deeds, and other good works, especially by good example, for this is a most meritorious work. (*James* v. 20.)

*Why did Jesus choose poor and illiterate fishermen to be His apostles?*

To show that the founding and propagating of the holy Catholic Church is not the work of man, but of God; for how could it be possible, without the evident assistance of God, that poor, illiterate fishermen could overthrow proud paganism, and bring nations to receive the doctrine of the crucified God-Man Jesus, who to the Jews was an abomination, to the Gentiles a folly!



## INSTRUCTION ON A GOOD INTENTION.

*Master, we have labored all the night, and have taken nothing, but at thy word I will let down the net.*

*(Luke v. 5.)*

**T**HERE are many people who by a special, but loving decree of God, seem to be born only for a miserable life, and who, with all this, can have no hope of a reward in the next world, because they do not avail themselves (by a good intention) of the miseries which God gives them as a ladder to heaven.

*In what does a good intention consist?*

In performing all our works, even the smallest, and in offering all our thoughts and words in the name of God, that is, for His honor and in accordance with His most holy will; that we receive all sufferings and afflictions cheerfully from His hand, and offer them in union with the passion of Jesus.

*How should we make a good intention?*

In the morning we should offer to the Lord all our thoughts, words, and deeds, all our crosses and afflictions, and all our steps during the day: 1. as a sacrifice of homage, to pay to Him the service, honor and adoration due Him; 2. a sacrifice of thanksgiving for graces received; 3. a sacrifice of propitiation to render some satisfaction to divine justice for our own sins and the sins of others; 4. a sacrifice of impetration to obtain, through the merits of Christ, new graces and gifts for ourselves and others. We must not forget, however, in making a good intention, to unite all our works with the merits of Jesus, by which alone they acquire worth and merit before God, and we must guard against impatience or sinful deeds by which we lose the merit of the good intention made in the morning, for a good intention cannot exist with sin. It is also very useful to place all our actions into the wounds of Jesus, offering them to Him by the hands of His Blessed Mother, and it is advisable frequently to renew our good intention during the day, by making use of these or similar words: "For the love of Thee, O Lord! For Thy sake! All in honor of God! With the intention I made this morning!" Endeavor to instruct the ignorant, how to make a good intention, and thus share in their good works.



*What benefit is derived from a good intention?*

St. Anselm says: "It renders all works, even the smallest, golden and divine;" and St. Gregory: "It makes all thoughts, words and deeds meritorious, and causes us to expect in the hour of death, like the wise virgins, the heavenly bridegroom, Jesus, and be richly rewarded by Him."

ASPIRATION. Incline my heart, O God, to Thy holy commandments. Guard me, that I work not in the night of sin, and thus gain nothing by my works. Assist all pastors that by Thy divine will, they may win souls for Thy kingdom, and bring them to Thee.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



Father, &c.

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T the Introit implore God's assistance, and say, with the priest: Hear, O Lord, my voice with which I have cried to thee: be thou my helper, forsake me not, nor do Thou despise me, O God, my Saviour. (*Ps. xxvi.*) The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? Glory be to the

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who hast prepared invisible good things for those that love Thee: pour into our hearts such a sense of Thy love, that we, loving Thee in all, and above all, may obtain Thy promises, which exceed all our desire. Through &c.

EPISTLE. (*i Peter* iii. 8—15.) DEARLY BELOVED, Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, being lovers of the brotherhood, merciful, modest, humble: not rendering evil for evil, nor railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing: for unto this you are called, that you may inherit a blessing. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him



decline from evil, and do good: let him seek after peace, and pursue it: because the eyes of the Lord are upon the just, and his ears unto their prayers: but the countenance of the Lord upon them that do evil things. And who is he that can hurt you, if you be zealous of good? But if also you suffer any thing for justice' sake, blessed are ye. And be not afraid of their fear, and be not troubled: but sanctify the Lord Christ, in your hearts.

*How can and how should we sanctify **the** Lord in our hearts?*

By practising those virtues which Peter here recommends, and which he so exactly describes; for thereby we become true disciples of Christ, honor Him and edify others, who by our good example are led to admire Christianity, and to become His followers. Moreover, we thus render ourselves more worthy of God's grace and protection, so that if for justice' sake we are persecuted by wicked men, we need not fear, because God is for us and will reward us with eternal happiness.

ASPIRATION. O good Saviour, Jesus Christ, grant that I may make Thy virtues my own, especially Thy humility, patience, mercy, and love; grant that I may practise them diligently, that I may glorify Thee, sanctify myself, and thus become worthy of Thy protection.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* v. 20—24.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: Except your justice abound more than that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not kill: and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say to you, that whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment. And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council. And whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. If therefore, thou bring thy gift at the altar, and there thou





remember that thy brother hath anything against thee, leave there thy offering before the altar, and go first to be reconciled to thy brother: and then coming, thou shalt offer thy gift.

*In what did the justice of the Pharisees consist?*

In external works of piety, in the avoidance of such gross vices as could not be concealed, and would have brought them to shame and disgrace. But in their hearts these Pharisees cherished evil, corrupt inclinations and desires, pride, envy, avarice, and studied malice and vengeance. Jesus, therefore, called them hypocrites, whitened sepulchres, and St. John calls them a brood of vipers. True justice



consists not only in external works of piety, that is, devotional works, but especially in a pure, sincere, self-sacrificing feeling towards God and man; without this all works, however good, are only a shell without a kernel.

*How are we to understand that which Christ here says of anger and abusive words?*

The meaning of Christ's words are: You have heard that murder was forbidden to your fathers in the desert, and that the murderer had to be given up to justice: but I say to you, whoever becomes angry with his neighbor, shall be in danger of divine judgment, and he who with abusive words, such as Raca, Villain, gives vent to his anger, using expressions of contempt and insult, as fool, scoundrel, profligate, wretch, is more liable to punishment. These degrees of anger are punished in different ways by God.

*Is anger always sinful?*

No, anger is sinful only when we wish or actually inflict some evil to the body, property, or honor of our neighbor; when we make use of such insulting and abusive words as injure his character, provoke and irritate him. If we become angry at the vices and crimes of others, when our office or the duties of our station demand that we watch over the conduct of those under our care, to punish and correct them, (as in the case of parents, teachers, and superiors) then anger is no sin. When one through pure love of God, becomes irritated at the sins and vices of his fellow-men, like King David, or if one urged to wrong, repels the tempter with indignation, this is even a holy anger. Thus St. Gregory says; "It is to be understood that anger created by impatience is a very different thing from anger produced by a zeal for justice. The one is caused by vice, the other by virtue." He, then, who becomes angry for justice' sake, commits no sin, but his conduct is holy and praiseworthy, for even our Lord was angry at those who bought and sold in the temple, (*John* ii. 15.) Paul at the magician Elymas, (*Acts* xiii. 8.) and Peter at the deceit of Ananias and Saphira. (*Acts* v. 3.) Anger, then, to be without sin, must proceed from true zeal for God's honor and the salvation of souls, by which we seek to prevent others from sin, and to make them better. Even in this respect, we must be careful to allow our anger no control over our reason, but to use it merely as a means of doing good, for we are often apt to take the sting of anger for holy zeal, when it is really nothing but egotism and ambition.



*Why must we first be reconciled with our neighbor before bringing an offering to God, or undertaking any good work?*

Because no offering or other good work can be pleasing to God, while we live in enmity, hatred, and strife with our neighbor; for by living thus we act altogether contrary to God's will. This should be remembered by all Christians, who go to confession and holy Communion, without forgiving those who have offended them, and asking pardon of those whom they have injured. These must know that instead of receiving absolution for their sins, they by an invalid confession are guilty of another sin, and eat their own judgment in holy Communion.

*How should reconciliation be made with our neighbor?*

With promptness, because the apostle says: Let not the sun go down upon your anger. (*Eph. iv. 26.*) But if the person you have offended is absent, says St. Augustine, and you cannot easily meet him, you are bound to be reconciled to him interiorly, that is, to humble yourself before God, and ask His forgiveness, making the firm resolution to be reconciled to your enemy as soon as possible. If he is accessible, go to him, and ask his forgiveness; if he has offended you, forgive him from your heart. The reconciliation should be sincere, for God sees into the heart; it should also be permanent, for if it is not lasting, it may be questioned if it was ever sincere. On account of this command of Christ to be reconciled to our enemies before bringing sacrifice, it was the custom in ancient times that the faithful gave the kiss of peace to one another at the sacrifice of Mass, before Communion, as even to this day do the priests and deacons, by which those who are present, are admonished to love one another with holy love, and to be perfectly reconciled with their enemies, before Communion.

ASPIRATION. O God, strike me not with the blindness of the Pharisees that, like them, I may seek to please man by my works, and thus be deprived of eternal reward. Banish from my heart all sinful anger, and give me a holy zeal in charity that I may be anxious only for Thy honor and for the salvation of my neighbor. Grant me also that I may offend no one, and willingly forgive those who have offended me, thus practicing true Christian justice, and become agreeable to Thee.



## MEANS OF PREVENTING ANGER.

**T**HE first and most effectual preventive is humility; for as among the proud there are always quarrels and contentions, (*Prov.* xiii. 10.) so among the humble reign peace, meekness and patience. To be humble, meek, and patient, we must frequently bring before our minds the example of Christ who did not sin, neither was guile found in His mouth, (*i Peter* ii. 22.) yet suffered great contradictions, many persecutions, scoffs and sneers from sinners, without threatening vengeance to any one for all He suffered; He says to us in truth: Learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart. (*Matt.* xi. 29.) A very good preventive of anger is to think over in the morning what causes will be likely to draw us into anger at any time during the day, and to arm ourselves against it by a firm resolution to bear all with patience and silence, and when afterwards anything unpleasant occurs, let us think, "What will I effect by my anger? Can I thereby make things better? Will I not even make myself ridiculous and injure my health?" (for experience as well as holy Scripture teaches, that anger shortens life.) (*Ecclus.* xxx. 26.) Finally, the most necessary preventive of anger is fervent prayer to God for the grace of meekness and patience, for although it seems difficult and almost impossible to our nature to be patient, by the grace of God it becomes not only possible, but even easy.

## INSTRUCTION ON SACRIFICE.

*Offer thy gift. (Matt. v. 24.)*

**I**N its wider and more universal sense sacrifice comprehends all religious actions by which a rational being presents himself to God, to be united with Him; and in this sense prayer, praising God, a contrite heart, charity to others, every good work, and observance of God's commandments is a sacrifice. Thus the Holy Scriptures say: Offer up the sacrifice of justice and trust in the Lord. (*Pss.* iv. 6.) Offer to God the sacrifice of praise. (*Pss.* xlix. 14.) Sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit; a contrite and humble heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. (*Pss.* l. 19.) It is a wholesome sacrifice to take heed to the commandments, and to depart from all iniquity. (*Ecclus.* xxxv. 2.) "Therefore," says St. Augustine, "every good work which is united in sanctity with God, is a true sacrifice, because it refers to the end



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of all good, to God, by whom we can be truly happy." As often, then, as you humble yourself in prayer before the majesty of God, when you give yourself up to God, and when you make your will subject to His divine will, you bring a sacrifice to God; as often as you punish your body by continency, and your senses by mortification, you bring a sacrifice to God, because you offer them as instruments of justice; (*Rom. vi. 13.*) as often as you subdue the evil concupiscence of the flesh, the perverted inclinations of your soul, deny yourself any worldly pleasure for the love of God, you bring a sacrifice to God. Such sacrifices you should daily offer to God; without which all others have no value and do not please God, such as these you can make every moment, when you think, speak, and act all for the love of God.

Strive then, Christian soul, to offer these pleasing sacrifices to God, the supreme Lord, and as you thus glorify Him, so will He one day reward you with unutterable glory.

*[Concerning Sacrifice in a stricter sense, especially the Sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross and its renewal in holy Mass, see the latter part of this book.]*

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

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HE Introit of this day's Mass is the prayer of a soul that trusts in God's powerful and merciful protection: The Lord is the strength of his people, the protector of the salvation of his Anointed: save, O Lord, thy people, and bless Thine inheritance, and rule them for ever. Unto Thee will I cry, O Lord: O my God, be not Thou silent to me; lest if Thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit. (*Ps. xxvii.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God of hosts, to whom belongeth all that is perfect: implant in our hearts the love of Thy name, and grant within us an increase of religion, that Thou mayest nourish in us what is good, and by the fervor of our devotion may preserve in us what Thou hast nourished. Through &c.



EPISTLE. (*Rom. vi. 3—11.*) BRETHREN, All we who are baptized in Christ Jesus, are baptized in his death. For we are buried together with him by baptism unto death: that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, to the end that we may serve sin no longer. For he that is dead is justified from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall live also together with Christ. Knowing that Christ, rising again from the dead, dieth now no more, death shall no more have dominion over him. For in that he died to sin, he died once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. So do you also reckon that you are dead indeed to sin, but alive unto God, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

EXPLANATION. The apostle here teaches that in consequence of our baptism we are made members of Christ's body, and must, therefore, die to sin; as Christ by His death died to physical life, but has risen again, so must we bury sin, by constant renewal of baptismal vows, and by self-mortification rise to a Christian life. As members of Christ's body we should in a spiritual manner imitate Him. As He permitted His body to be nailed to the cross to atone for our sins, so should we crucify our corrupt nature by self-denial, and as He after His Resurrection lives always, because having risen He dieth no more, so we, risen from the death of sin, should lead a pious life conformable to that of Christ.

ASPIR. I trust, O Lord Jesus, that by the merits of Thy passion I have risen from the death of sin: grant me Thy grace, that as Thou diest no more, so may I die no more by sin, but live for God, according to Thy law.

GOSPEL. (*Mark. viii. 1—9.*) AT THAT TIME, When there was a great multitude with Jesus, and had nothing to eat, calling his disciples together, he saith to





them: I have compassion on the multitude, for behold they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat; and if I shall send them away fasting to their home, they will faint in the way: for some of them came from afar off. And his disciples answered him: From whence can any one fill them here with bread in the wilderness? And he asked them: How many loaves have ye? Who said: Seven. And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground. And taking the seven loaves, giving thanks, he broke, and gave to his disciples to set before them: and they



set them before the people. And they had a few little fishes, and he blessed them, and commanded them to be set before them. And they did eat, and were filled, and they took up that which was left of the fragments, seven baskets: and they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

*Why did Christ say: I have compassion on the multitude?*

Because of His mercy and goodness to man, as well as to prove that which He taught on another occasion, (*Matt. vi. 33.*) that to those who seek first the kingdom of God and His justice all other things will be added without asking; for none of the multitude asked Christ for food, and yet He provided for all.

*REMARK. The instruction after the gospel for the fourth Sunday in Lent, where a similar miracle is mentioned, may be read to-day.*

## INSTRUCTION ON BLESSING.

*And He blessed them. (Mark viii. 7.)*

**S**EDUCED by Satan, the first man violated the holy command of God, and by his sin brought upon himself and his habitation the curse of divine wrath. (*Gen. iii. 17.*) Man was made by God, and therefore subject to Him, but was himself master of all created things. After the sin of disobedience, however, all creation revolted against him: the animals fled from him, the fields yielded only thorns and thistles, the herbs became poisonous to him, or refused him their former wholesome power. Innumerable evils followed, all men and even the whole earth suffered from them; the devil drew both into his sphere and made them his servants, and this evil spirit now made use of created things to divert man altogether from God and to cause his eternal ruin. But God decreed that man and earth should not remain in this condition. Christ, the Son of God, came upon earth, redeemed it from the bonds of Satan, and gave all men the power to become once more God's children. The devil was conquered by the cross, but not slain; man and the earth were indeed taken from his dominion, but not from his influence; for he even now, as the apostle writes, goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, (*i Peter v. 8.*); and as he used the forbidden fruit in paradise to seduce man, he now uses the created things of the earth to tempt man, and make him his servant.



Man and all creation had to be drawn from this pernicious influence, to be liberated from the bondage of corruption and be brought to the freedom of the children of God. (*Rom. viii. 19.*) This is done in the Church, to which Christ entrusted the power of binding and loosing, and gave the work of sanctifying through the Holy Ghost, by means of blessing and consecrating. By virtue of the merits of Christ, and with the assistance of the Holy Ghost, the Church, or the priest in her name, therefore blesses and consecrates persons as well as other created things which they are to use, or which she is to apply to the service of God. In this the Church follows the example of Christ and the Apostles. Jesus embraced children and laid His hands upon them, blessing them; (*Mark x. 16.*) He blessed bread and fishes, the food of thousands; blessed bread and wine at the last supper; (*Matt. xxvi. 26.*) was recognized by the disciples in the blessing of bread; (*Luke xxiv. 30.*) blessing the disciples He ascended into heaven; (*Luke xxiv. 51.*) by His command the apostles wished peace to every house into which they stepped; (*Matt. x. 12, 13.*) and St. Paul expressly says, that every living thing is sanctified by prayer and the word of God. (*i Tim. iv. 5.*) Following the example and command of Christ the Church also introduced blessings and benedictions which were prefigured in the Old Law. God commanded the priests to sanctify and to consecrate whatever was to belong to His service, (*Levit. viii.*) and the Old Law is full of blessings and consecrations which had to be used by the priests; (*Exod. xxix. 36.; xxx. 25.; xl. 9.*) and if persons and things used for God's service were to be blessed, how much more so in the New Law which in place of the type, contains the reality and truth! The testimony of Scripture is confirmed by all the holy Fathers, and by the constant practice of the Church which has received from Christ, the power to bless and to consecrate.

The blessing or benediction of the Church is nothing more than a prayer of intercession which the priest makes in the name of the Church, that for the sake of Christ (therefore the sign of the cross) and the prayers of the saints, God may give His blessings to a person or thing, and sanctify it. Through consecration, in which besides prayer and the sign of the cross, the anointing with holy oil is used, things required for divine service are separated from all other things and especially sanctified. Thus persons, fruits, bread, wine, houses, ships and fields, are blessed; churches, altars, bells, &c., are consecrated.



*What virtue have these blessings?*

The chief effects of the blessing of persons are: Preservation or liberation from the influence of Satan; preservation of the soul from his temptations and evil suggestions; preservation of the body and of the property from his pernicious malice; forgiveness of venial sins, and strength to suppress concupiscence; curing of sickness and physical evils, whether natural or supernatural; a blessing upon the person and his surroundings; the imparting of the grace of conversion; the advantage of the prayer of the Church and further grace for the remission of temporal and eternal punishment. — The blessing of things withdraws them from the influence of the devil, so that he can no longer use them as a means of bringing us into sin, but that they rather serve us as a protection against the evil spirit, and as a means for our salvation.

*Whence do the blessings derive their force?*

From the merits of Christ who by His death on the cross vanquished Satan. The Church asks God that He will through these merits and through the intercession of the saints bless a person or thing, and make that which is blessed profitable to us for both body and soul. Whether or not the effects manifest themselves in the person who receives the blessing, or makes use of the object blessed, depends on his faith and moral condition, as also on the usefulness or profit of the blessing to him. We should not, then, place obstacles in its way by diffidence in God and the prayers of the Church or by a sinful life, but should always be convinced that these benedictions will serve for our benefit, if according to God's will they are used as the Church intends, as a means to overcome evil, to sanctify ourselves, and to honor God.

*Why are salt and water blessed?*

This is plainly shown in the prayer the priest says in blessing them; for he asks, in the name of the Church, that God may pour the virtue of His blessing over the water that it may conquer devils, prevent sickness, and that everything which is sprinkled with it, may be preserved from every injury, and that He may bless the salt, so that it may be salutary for the body and soul of all who use it. The salt which Eliseus sprinkled into the unwholesome waters of Jericho healed them, (iv *King.* ii. 20. 21.) and is a type of blessed salt.



*Why are the people sprinkled with holy water on Sundays?*

To remind the people of the interior purity with which they should come to divine service, and fulfil the duties of their calling; and to exhort them to purify themselves from the stains of sin by tears of sorrow, and repentance. Hence the priest in sprinkling the faithful recites the words of the fiftieth psalm: *Asperges me hyssopo, &c.* Sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed; to remind them to preserve the purity and innocence procured by the blood of the Lamb of God, and communicated to them in baptism. Finally, the people are sprinkled that the temptations of the devil may depart from them, enabling them to attend with great fervor and with more recollection to the holy service.

*What else is to be remembered concerning the use of blessed things?*

That they are to be used with faithful confidence for the purpose for which the Church blessed them, and are to be treated with great reverence, because they are blessed by the Church in the name of Jesus, a custom almost as old as Christianity itself. The Christian must not believe that blessed things which he possesses, carries, or uses, will make him holy, for he should always remember that things blessed are only a means of sanctification, and are only effectual when the faithful have the earnest will to die rather than sin, to fight with all fervor against the enemies of their salvation, to follow Christ, and be thereby received into the freedom of the children of God, and into heaven.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



At the Introit the Church invites us to give praise to God in the following words: Oh, clap your hands, all ye nations: shout unto God with the voice of joy. For the Lord is most high, he is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth. (*Ps. xlv.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, whose providence is unerring in what it ordains, we humbly



beseech Thee to put away from us all hurtful things, and to give us all things which will profit us. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Rom. vi. 19—23.*) BRETHREN, I speak a human thing, because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as you have yielded your members to serve uncleanness and iniquity unto iniquity, so now yield your members to serve justice unto sanctification. For when you were the servants of sin, you were free from justice. What fruit therefore had you then in those things, of which you are now ashamed? For the end of them is death. But now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end life everlasting. For the wages of sin is death. But the grace of God, life everlasting, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul here admonishes the Romans who had been converted to Christianity, but were still sensual and weak, that they ought to be much more zealous in serving God and mastering their passions. He demands of them that they should at least strive now as hard to save their souls as they once did to destroy them. This certainly is but right, for many a man would become just and holy if he would do as much for heaven, as he does for sin and hell. But to know how wholesome it is to consecrate themselves to justice and sanctity, he wishes them to consider what advantage they derived from sin. Nothing is gained from it but shame, confusion, sorrow, and death, but by a pious life, God's grace and eternal life. — Often consider this, Christian soul, and do not defile yourself by sins, which profit nothing, but bring shame, grief, and the retributive wrath of God.

GOSPEL. (*Matt. vii. 15—21.*) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: Beware of false prophets, who come to you in the clothing of sheep, but inwardly they are ravening wolves: by their fruits you shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and the evil tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can





an evil tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them. Not every one that saith to me: Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doth the will of my Father who is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.

*Who are the false prophets?*

Those seducers who under an appearance of virtue and honesty lure innocent, simple souls from the right path, and lead them to vice and shame; who by sweet words,



such as: "God is full of love, and will not be severe on sin, He does not require so very much of us, He knows we are weak, and if a person sins, he can be converted," seek to steal from souls all modesty and fear of God. Guard against such hypocrites, for they have the poison of vipers on their tongues. By the false prophets are also understood those who propagate error, who by superficial words degrade the true faith, who speak always of love and liberty, and who under the pretence of making people free and happy, bring many a soul to doubt and error, depriving it of true faith and peace of heart.

*How can we know the false prophets?*

By their **works**; for evil, corrupted men can produce only bad fruit. If we look into their life we will find that at heart they are immoral hypocrites who observe external propriety only that they may the more easily spread their poison. The false teachers and messengers of error may be known by their lives, but especially by their intentions, which are to subvert all divine order, and to put the unrestrained lust of the flesh and tyranny in its place.

*Who else are understood by the false prophets?*

Those who under pretence of making men happy and rich, induce the credulous to make use of superstition, of wicked arts, deceit, and injustice; especially those who under the deceiving appearance of liberty and equality, independence and public good, incite them to open or secret revolt against civil and ecclesiastical authority.

Be not deceived by these so-called public benefactors who look always to their own advantage, but trust in God, support yourself honestly, live like a Christian, and you will find true liberty and happiness here and hereafter.

*Why does Christ say: "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire?"*

He warns us that faith without good works is not sufficient for salvation; and he therefore adds; Not every one that saith: Lord, Lord (who outwardly professes himself my servant, but is not really such) shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who, (by the fulfilment of the duties of his state of life and by the practice of good works), does the will of my Father, merits heaven. Strive then, Christian soul, to fulfil God's will in all things, perform your daily duties with a good intention, and you will certainly obtain the kingdom of heaven.



## INSTRUCTION ON GOOD WORKS.

*What are good works?*

**A**LL the actions of man which are performed according to the will of God, while in the state of grace, for the love of God.

*Which are the principal good works?*

Prayer, fasting, and alms-deeds. These are especially inculcated in holy Scripture. (*Tob. xiii. 8.*) By prayer is here understood all religious services; by fasting all mortification of soul and body; by alms-deeds all works of charity.

*How many kinds of charitable works are there?*

Two kinds: spiritual and corporal.

*Which are the spiritual works of mercy?*

Those that are performed for the good of the soul: to admonish sinners; to teach the ignorant; to counsel the doubtful; to console the afflicted; to suffer injustice patiently; to forgive all injuries, and to pray for the living and the dead.

*Which are the corporal works?*

Those which are performed for the good of the body: to feed the hungry; to give drink to the thirsty; to clothe the naked; to visit and ransom the captives; to harbor the harborless; to visit the sick; and to bury the dead.

*Can we be saved without good works?*

No, for Christ expressly says: Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire. The servant in the gospel who did not even waste the talent received, but only hid it in the ground, was therefore cast into outer darkness. How greatly do those err who hope to reach heaven, simply because they do no evil! Of this great mistake St. Chrysostom plainly says: "If you had a servant who was in truth no robber, no glutton or drunkard, but who sat at home idle, neglecting every thing for which you had employed him, would you not pay him with the whip and send him off? Is it not bad enough to neglect that which duty demands?" Such a servant is the Christian who, doing



neither good nor evil, makes himself thereby unfit for heaven which is the reward of work performed, and if no work has been done, no reward is to be expected.

SUPPLICATION. O Lord, guard me from false prophets, heretics, and seducers, and grant me the grace, that according to St. Paul's instructions I may become fruitful in all good works. Inflammé my heart, that I may adorn my faith with them, thus do the will of the Heavenly Father, and render myself worthy of heaven.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



THE Introit of the Mass reads: We have received thy mercy, O God, in the midst of thy temple: According to thy name, O God, so also is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of justice. Great is the Lord, and exceedingly to be praised in the city of our God, in his mountain. (*Ps. xlvii.* Glory be to the Father, &c.)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Lord, we beseech Thee, mercifully grant us the spirit to think and do always the things that are right: that we, who can not subsist without Thee, may by Thee be enabled to live according to Thy will. Through &c.

EPISTLE. (*Rom. viii. 12—17.*) BRETHREN, We are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you shall die: but if by the spirit you mortify the deed of the flesh, you shall live. For whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For you have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry: Abba (Father). For the Spirit him-



self giveth testimony to our spirit, that we are the sons of God. And if sons, heirs also: heirs indeed of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

*Who live according to the flesh?*

Those who follow the evil pleasures and the desires of corrupt nature, rather than the voice of faith and conscience. Such men are not guided by the Spirit of God, for He dwells not in the sensual man, (*Gen. vi. 3.*) they are no children of God, and will not inherit heaven, but eternal death. But he who is directed by the Spirit of God, and with Him and through Him crucifies his flesh and its concupiscence, is inspired with filial confidence in God by the Holy Ghost, who dwells in him, and by whom he cries: Abba (Father.) Prove yourself well, Christian soul, that you may know whether you live according to the flesh, and strive by prayer and fasting to mortify all carnal and sensual desires that you may by such means become a child of God and heir of heaven.

ASPIRATION. Strengthen me, O Lord, that I may not live according to the desires of the flesh, but resist them firmly by the power of Thy Spirit, that I may not die the eternal death.

GOSPEL. (*Luke xvi. 1—9.*) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke to his disciples this parable: There was a certain rich man who had a steward: and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said to him: How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship, for now thou canst be steward no longer. And the steward said within himself: What shall I do, because my lord taketh away from me my stewardship? To dig I am not able: to beg I am ashamed. I know what I will do, that when I shall be removed from the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. Therefore calling together every one of his lord's debtors, he said to the first: How much dost thou owe my lord? But he said: A hundred barrels of oil. And he said to him: Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then he said to another: And





how much dost thou owe? Who said: A hundred quarters of wheat. He said to him: Take thy bill, and write eighty. And the lord commended the unjust steward, forasmuch as he had done wisely: for the children of this world are wiser in their generations than the children of light. And I say to you: Make unto you friends of the mammon of iniquity, that when you shall fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings.

*Who are represented by the rich man and his steward?*

The rich man represents God, the steward is man, to whom God has confided the various goods of soul and body,



of grace and nature: faith, intellect, memory, free will; the five senses, health, strength of body, beauty, skill, power over others, time and opportunity for good, temporal riches, and other gifts. These various goods of soul and body God gives us not as our own, but as things to be used for His honor and the salvation of man. He will therefore demand the strictest account of us if we use them for sin, luxury, seduction, or oppression of others.

*Why did Christ make use of this parable?*

To teach us that God requires of every man a strict account of whatever has been given to him, and to urge us to works of charity, particularly alms-deeds.

*What friends do we make by alms-giving?*

According to St. Ambrose they are the poor, the saints and angels, even Christ Himself: for that which we give to the poor, we give to Christ. (*Matt. xxv. 40.*) And: He that hath mercy on the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and he will repay him. (*Prov. xix. 17.*) "The hands of the poor," says Peter Chrysologus, "are the hands of Christ," through whom we send our riches to heaven before us, and through whose intercession we obtain the grace of salvation.

*Why did his lord commend the steward?*

Because of his prudence and foresight, but not for his injustice; for he adds: The children of this world are wiser than the children of light: that is, the worldly-minded understand better how to obtain temporal goods than do Christians to lay up treasures for themselves in heaven.

*Why is wealth called unjust?*

Because riches are often amassed and retained unjustly, often lead man to injustice, and because they are often squandered or badly used.

SUPPLICATION. Grant me the grace, O my just God and Judge, that I may so use the goods of this earth confided to me by Thee, that I may make friends, who at my death will receive me into eternal joys.



## ON THE SIN OF DETRACTION.

*And the same was accused unto him. (Luke xvi. 1.)*

**T**HE steward in the gospel was justly accused on account of the goods he had wasted; but there are many who lose their good name and honor by false accusations, and malicious talk! Alas, what great wrongs do detracting tongues cause in this world! How mean a vice is detraction, how seldom attention is paid to its evil, how rarely the injury is repaired!

*When is our neighbor slandered?*

When he is accused of a vice of which he is not guilty; when a secret crime is made known with the intention of hurting him, or when our duty does not require us to mention it; when we attribute an evil intention to him or entirely misconstrue his actions and omissions; when his good qualities or commendable actions are denied or lessened, or his merits underrated; when we remain silent, or speak ambiguously in cases where praise is due him; when we lend a willing ear to detractions, and make no effort to stop them; and lastly, when joy is felt in the detraction.

*Is detraction a great sin?*

Yes, for it is directly opposed to the love of our neighbor, therefore to the love of God, hence it is, as St. Ambrose says, hateful to God and man. By it we rob our neighbor of a possession greater than riches, (*Prov. xxii. 1.*) and often he is plunged by it into want and misery, even into the greatest vices; St. Ambrose says: "Let us fly from the vice of detraction, for it is altogether a satanic abyss, full of deceit." Finally, detraction is a great sin, because it can seldom be recalled, and the injury done by it is very great, and often irreparable.

*What should we do when we have committed this sin?*

We should retract the calumny as soon as possible and repair the injury done to our neighbor in regard to his name or temporal goods; we should detest this sin, regret it, and be cleansed from it by penance, we should daily pray for him whom we have injured, and in future guard against the like fault.

*Are we ever allowed to reveal the wrongs of our neighbor?*

To make public the faults of our neighbor only for the entertainment of idle people, or for the sake of news,



and to satisfy the curiosity of others, is always sinful. But if after having reproached or advised our neighbor fraternally, without obtaining our end, we make known his faults to his parents or superiors for the sake of punishment and reformation, far from being a sin it is rather a duty, against which those err who are silent about the sins of their neighbor, when by speaking they could prevent the sin and save him much unhappiness.

*Is it a sin to listen willingly to detraction?*

Yes, for we thus give the detractors occasion and encouragement. Therefore St. Bernard says: "Whether to detract is a greater sin than to listen to detraction, I will not decide. The devil sits on the tongue of the detractor as he does on the ear of the listener." In such cases we must strive to interrupt, to prevent the detracting words, or else withdraw; or if we can do none of these, we must show in our countenance our displeasure, for the Holy Ghost says: The northwind driveth away rain, so doth a sad countenance a backbiting tongue. (*Prov. xxv. 23.*) The same demeanor is to be observed in regard to improper language.

*What varieties of detraction are there?*

There is a certain detestable kind of detraction which degrades and ridicules others by witty and sneering words. Still worse is that detraction which carries the faults of others from one place to another, thus exciting those who are on good terms to hard feeling, or making those who are living in enmity more opposed to each other. The whisperer and the double tongued, says the Holy Ghost, is accursed, for he hath troubled many that were at peace.

*What should deter us from detraction?*

The thought of the enormity of this sin; of the difficulty, even impossibility of repairing the injury caused; of the punishment it incurs, for St. Paul expressly says: Calumniators shall not possess the kingdom of God, (*i Cor. vi. 10.*) and Solomon writes: My son, fear the Lord, and the king: and have nothing to do with detractors; for their destruction shall rise suddenly. (*Prov. xxiv. 22.*)

SUPPLICATION. Guard me, O most loving Jesus, that I may not be so blinded, either by hatred or envy, as to rob my neighbor of his good name, or make myself guilty of such a grievous sin.



## CONSOLATION FOR THOSE WHO HAVE SUFFERED FROM DETRACTION.

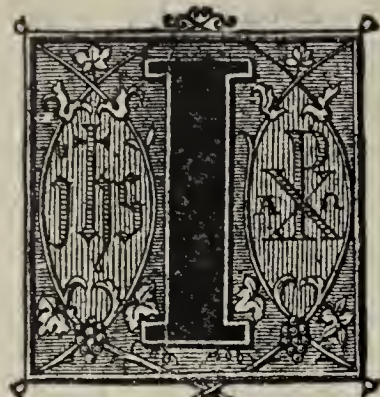
**I**F your good name has been taken away by evil tongues, you may be consoled by knowing that God permitted this to humble you, to exercise you in patience and free you from pride and vain self-complacency. Turn your eyes to the saints of the Old and the New Law, to the chaste Joseph who was cast into prison on a false charge of adultery, (*Gen.* xxxix.) to the meek David publicly accused by Semei as a man of blood, (*ii Kings* xvi. 7.) to the chaste Susanna who was also accused of adultery, tried and condemned to death. (*Dan.* xiii.) Jesus, the king of saints, was called a drunkard, accused and condemned as a blasphemer, a friend of the devil, an inciter of sedition among the people, and like the greatest criminal was nailed to the cross between two thieves. Remember besides that it does not injure you in the sight of God, if all possible evil is said of you, and that He, at all times, cares for those who trust in Him; for he who touches the honor of those who fear God, touches, as it were, the pupil of His eye, (*Zach.* ii. 8.) and shall not go unpunished. St. Chrysostom says: "If you are guilty, be converted; if you are innocent, think of Christ."

PRAYER. O most innocent Jesus, who wert thus calumniated, I submit myself wholly to Thy divine will, and am ready like Thee, to bear all slanders and detractions, as with perfect confidence I yield to Thy care my good name, convinced that Thou at Thy pleasure wilt defend and protect it, and save me from the hands of my enemies.





## INSTRUCTION ON THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



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**I**MPLORE God for help and protection against all temptations both visible and invisible, and say with the priest at the Introit: Behold, God is my helper, and the Lord is the protector of my soul: turn back the evils upon my enemies, and cut them off in thy truth, O Lord, my protector. (*Ps. liii.*) Save me, O God, by thy name, and deliver me in thy strength. Glory &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** Let the ears of Thy mercy, O Lord, be open to the prayers of Thy suppliants: and that Thou mayest grant them their desires, make them to ask such things as please Thee. Thro'.

**EPISTLE.** (*i Cor. x. 6—13.*) **BRETHREN,** Let us not covet evil things, as they also coveted. Neither become ye idolaters, as some of them: as it is written: The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed fornication, and there fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them tempted, and perished by the serpents. Neither do you murmur, as some of them murmured, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now all these things happened to them in figure, and they are written for our correction, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore he that thinketh himself to stand, let him take heed lest he fall. Let no temptation take hold on you, but such as is human: and God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able, but will make also with temptation issue that you may be able to bear it.



*Can we sin by thought and desire?*

Yes, if we desire evil and forbidden things, or voluntarily think of them with pleasure, for God prohibits not only evil deeds, but evil thoughts and desires in regard to our neighbor's wife or goods. (*Exod. xx. 17.*) Christ says, (*Matt. v. 28.*) that he who looks upon a woman with evil desire, has already committed adultery. But wicked thoughts and imagination are sinful only when a person consents to, or entertains them deliberately. They become, however, an occasion of gaining merit, if we earnestly strive against them. For this reason God sometimes permits even the just to be tempted by them.

*What is meant by tempting God?*

Demanding presumptuously a mark or sign of divine omnipotence, goodness or justice. This sin is committed when without cause we desire that articles of faith should be demonstrated and confirmed by a new miracle; when we throw ourselves needlessly into danger of body or soul expecting God to deliver us; when in dangerous illness the ordinary and natural remedies are rejected, and God's immediate assistance expected.

*Is it a great sin to murmur against God?*

That it is such may be learned from the punishment which God inflicted on the murmuring Israelites; for besides Kore, Dathan, and Abiron whom the earth devoured, many thousands of them were consumed by fire; and yet these had not murmured against God directly, but only against Moses and Aaron whom God had placed over them as their leaders. From this it is seen that God looks upon murmuring against spiritual and civil authority, instituted by Him, as murmuring against Himself. Hence Moses said to the Israelites: Your murmuring is not against us, but against the Lord. (*Exod. xvi. 8.*)

ASPIRATION. Purify my heart, I beseech Thee, O Lord, from all evil thoughts and desires. Let it never enter my mind to tempt Thee, or to be dissatisfied with Thy fatherly dispensations. Suffer me not to be tempted beyond my strength, but grant me so much fortitude, that I may overcome all temptations, and even derive benefit from them for my soul's salvation.





GOSPFL. (*Luke xix. 41—47.*) AT THAT TIME, when Jesus drew near Jerusalem, seeing the city, he wept over it, saying: If thou also hadst known, and that in this thy day, the things that are to thy peace: but now they are hidden from thy eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and straiten thee on every side, and beat thee flat to the ground, and thy children who are in thee: and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone, because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation. And entering



into the temple, he began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought, saying to them: It is written, My house is the house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves. And he was teaching daily in the temple.

*Why did our Saviour weep over the city of Jerusalem?*

Because of the ingratitude and obduracy of its inhabitants who would not receive Him as their Redeemer, and who through impenitence were hastening to destruction.

*When was the time of visitation?*

The period in which God sent them one prophet after another who urged them to penance, and whom they persecuted, stoned, and killed. (*Matt. xxiii. 34.*) It was especially the time of Christ's ministry, when He so often announced His salutary doctrine in the temple of Jerusalem, confirmed it by miracles, proving Himself to be the Messiah, the Saviour of the world, but was despised and rejected by this hardened and impenitent city.

*Who are prefigured by this hardened and impenitent city?*

The hard-hearted, unrepenting sinners who will not recognize the time of God's visitation, in which He urges them by the mouth of His preachers, confessors, and superiors, and by inward inspiration to reform their lives and seek the salvation of their soul, but who give no ear to these admonitions, and defer conversion to the end of their lives. Their end will be like to that of this impious city; then the enemy, that is, the evil spirit, will surround their soul, tempt, terrify, and drag it into the abyss of ruin. Oh, how foolish it is to squander so lightly the time of grace, the days of salvation! Oh, how would the damned do penance could they but return to earth! Oh, how industriously would they employ the time to save their soul! Use then, my dear Christian, the time of grace which God designs for you, and which, when it is run out or carelessly thrown away, will not be lengthened for a moment.

*Will God conceal from the wicked that which serves for their salvation?*

No; but while they are running after the pleasures of this life, as St. Gregory says, they see not the misfortunes treading in their footsteps, and as consideration of the future



makes them uncomfortable in the midst of their worldly pleasures, they remove the terrible thought far from them, and thus run with eyes blindfolded in the midst of their pleasure into eternal flames. Not God, but they themselves hide the knowledge of all that is for their peace, and thus they perish.

ASPIRATION. I beseech Thee, O Lord, who didst weep over the city of Jerusalem, because it knew not the time of its visitation, to enlighten my heart, that I may know and profit by the season of grace.

### THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CITY AND TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM.

*Has our divine Saviour's prophecy concerning the city of Jerusalem been fulfilled?*

**Y**ES, and in the most terrible manner. The Jews, oppressed by the Romans, their cruel masters, revolted, killed many of their enemies, and drove them out of Jerusalem. Knowing well that this would not be permitted to pass unavenged, the Jews armed themselves for a desperate resistance. The Emperor Nero sent a powerful army under the command of Vespasian against the city of Jerusalem, which first captured the smaller fortresses of Judea, and then laid siege to the city. The want and misery of the inhabitants had already reached the highest pitch; for within the city ambitious men had caused conflicts; factions had been formed, daily fighting each other, and reddening the streets with blood, while the angry Romans stormed outside. Then a short time of respite was granted to the unfortunate Jews. The Emperor Nero was murdered at Rome in the year of our Lord 68; his successor Galba soon died, and the soldiers placed their beloved commander Vespasian upon the imperial throne. He then left Jerusalem with his army, but in the year 70, sent his son Titus with a new army to Judea, with orders to capture the city at any price, and to punish its inhabitants.

It was the time of Easter, and a multitude of Jews had assembled from all provinces of the land, when Titus appeared with his army before the gates of Jerusalem, and surrounded the city. The supply of food was soon exhausted, famine and pestilence came upon the city and raged terribly. The leader of the savage revolutionists, John of Gischala, caused the houses to be searched, and the remaining food to be torn from the starving, or to be forced from them



by terrible tortures. To save themselves from this outrageous tyrant, the Jews took the leader of a band of robbers, named Simon, with his whole gang into the city. John and Simon with their followers now sought to annihilate each other. John took possession of the temple. Simon besieged him; blood was streaming in the temple and in the streets. Only when the battle-din of the Romans was heard from without, did the hostile factions unite, go to meet the enemy, and resist his attack. As the famine increased, many Jews secretly left the city to seek for herbs. But Titus captured them with his cavalry, and crucified those who were armed. Nearly five hundred men, and sometimes more, were every day crucified in sight of the city, so that there could not be found enough of crosses and places of execution; but even this terrible sight did not move the Jews to submission. Incited by their leaders to frenzy, they obstinately resisted, and Titus finding it impossible to take the city by storm, concluded to surround it by walls in order to starve the inhabitants. In three days his soldiers built a wall of about ten miles in circumference, and thus the Saviour's prediction was fulfilled: Thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and straiten thee on every side.

The famine in this unfortunate city now reached its most terrific height; the wretched inhabitants searched the very gutters for food, and ate the most disgusting things. A woman, ravenous from hunger, strangled her own child, roasted it, and ate half of it; the leaders smelling the horrible meal, forced a way into the house, and by terrible threats compelled the woman to show them what she had eaten; she handed them the remaining part of the roasted child, saying: "Eat it, it is my child; I presume you are not more dainty than a woman, or more tender than a mother." Stricken with horror they rushed from the house. Death now carried away thousands daily, the streets and the houses were full of corpses. From the fourteenth of April when the siege commenced, to the first of July, there were counted one hundred and fifty-eight thousand dead bodies; six hundred thousand others were thrown over the walls into the trenches to save the city from infection. All who could flee, fled; some reached the camp of the Romans in safety; Titus spared the helpless, but all who fell into his hands armed, were crucified. Flight offered no better security. The Roman soldiers had learned that many Jews had swallowed gold to secure it from the avarice of the robbers, and therefore the stomachs of many were cut open. Two thousand such corpses were found one morning in the



## 482 USEFUL LESSONS CONCERNING DEATH-BED REPENTANCE.

camp of the Romans. The attempts of Titus to prevent this cruelty were unavailing. Finally, when misery had reached its height, Titus succeeded in carrying the fort, Antonia, and with his army forced a passage as far as the temple which had been held by John of Gischala with his famous band. Desirous of saving the temple, Titus offered the revolutionists free passage from it, but his proposition was rejected, and the most violent contest then raged; the Romans trying to enter the temple, and being continually repulsed, at last, one of the soldiers seized a firebrand, and threw it into one of the rooms attached to the temple. The flames in an instant caught the whole of the inner temple, and totally consumed it, so that this prediction of our Lord was also fulfilled. The Romans butchered all the inhabitants whom they met, and Titus having razed the ruins of the temple and city, ploughed it over, to indicate that this city was never to be rebuilt. During the siege one million one hundred thousand Jews lost their lives; ninety-seven thousand were sold as slaves, and the rest of the people dispersed over the whole earth.

Thus God punished the impenitent city and nation, over whose wretchedness the Saviour wept so bitterly, and thus was fulfilled the prediction made by Him long before.

*What do we learn from this?*

That as this prediction so also all other threats and promises of the Saviour will be fulfilled. The destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem, the dispersion of the Jews, are historical facts which cannot be denied, and testify through all centuries to the truth of our Lord's word: Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. (*Matt. xxiv. 35.*)

## USEFUL LESSONS CONCERNING DEATH-BED REPENTANCE.

*Can a sinner rely upon his being converted at the end of his life?*

**B**Y no means, for this would be a sin against the mercy of God which is much the same as the sin against the Holy Ghost. "God," says St. Augustine, "generally so punishes such negligent sinners, that in the end they forget themselves, as in health they forgot Him." He says: They have turned their back to me, and not their face: and in the time of their affliction they will say: Arise, and deliver us! Where are the gods whom



thou hast made thee? Let them arise and deliver thee in the time of thy affliction. (*Jer.* ii. 27—28.) And although we have a consoling example in the case of the penitent thief, yet this, as St. Augustine says, is only one, that the sinner may not despair: and it is only one, so that the sinner may have no excuse for his temerity in putting off his repentance unto the end.

*What may we hope of those who are converted at the close of life?*

Everything that is good if they be truly converted, but this is a very rare thing, as St. Augustine says: "It cannot be asserted with any security, that he who repents at the end has forgiveness;" and St. Jerome writes: "Scarcely one out of thousands whose life was impious, will truly repent at death and obtain forgiveness of sin;" and St. Vincent Ferrer says, "For a man who has lived an impious life to die a good death is a greater miracle than the raising of the dead to life." We need not be surprised at this, for repentance at the end of life is extorted by the fear of death and the coming judgment. St. Augustine says, that it is not he who abandons sin, but sin abandons him, for he would not cease to offend God, if life were granted him. What can we expect from such a conversion?

*When should we repent?*

While we are in health, in possession of our senses and strength, for according to the words of St. Augustine, the repentance of the sick is a sickly repentance. As experience proves, man while ill is so tormented and bewildered by the pains of sickness and the fear of death, by remorse of conscience, and the temptations of the devil as well as by anxiety for those whom he leaves, that he can scarcely collect his thoughts, much less fit himself for true repentance. Since it is so hard for many to do penance while they are in health, and have nothing to prevent them from elevating their mind to God, how much more difficult will it be for them, when the body is weakened and tortured by the pains of sickness. It has been made known by many persons when convalescent, that they retained not the slightest recollection of anything which occurred during their illness, and although they confessed and received the last Sacraments, they did not remember it. If then you have committed a grievous sin, do not delay to be reconciled as soon as possible by contrition and a sacramental confession. Do not put off repentance from day to day, for thereby



conversion becomes more difficult, so much so that without extraordinary grace from God, you cannot repent. God does not give His grace to the presumptuous scoffer.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



At the Introit of the Mass pray with the Church for God's help to guard us against our enemies: When I cried to the Lord, he heard my voice, from them that draw near to me, and he humbled them, who is before all ages, and remains forever. Cast thy care upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee. (*Ps. liv.*) Hear, O God, my prayer, and despise not my supplication; be attentive to me, and hear me. Glory &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** O God, who dost manifest Thine almighty power above all in showing pardon and pity: multiply upon us Thy mercy, that we running forward to the attainment of Thy promises, may be made partakers of Thy heavenly treasures. Through &c.

**EPISTLE.** (*i Cor. xii. 2—11.*) **BRETHREN,** You know that when you were heathens, you went to dumb idols according as you were led. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man, speaking by the Spirit of God, saith Anathema to Jesus. And no man can say: the Lord Jesus, but by the Holy Ghost. Now there are diversities of graces, but the same Spirit; and there are diversities of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but the same God, who worketh all in all. And the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man unto profit. To one, indeed, by the Spirit, is given the word of wisdom: and to another, the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit: to another, faith



in the same Spirit: to another, the grace of healing in one Spirit: to another, the working of miracles: to another, prophecy: to another, the discerning of spirits: to another, divers kinds of tongues: to another, interpretation of speeches. But all these things one and the same Spirit worketh, dividing to every one according as he will.

EXPLANATION. The apostle here reminds the Corinthians of the great grace they received from God in their conversion, and urges them to be grateful for it; for while heathens, they cursed Jesus, but being now brought to the knowledge of the Spirit of God, they possess Christ as their Lord and Redeemer who can be known and professed only by the enlightenment of the Holy Ghost. The holy Spirit works in different ways, conferring His graces on whom He wills; to one He gives wisdom to understand the great truths of Christianity; to another the gift of healing the sick; to another the gift of miracles and of prophecy; to another the gift of discerning spirits, to know if one is governed by the Spirit of God, or of the world, Satan and the flesh; to another the gift of tongues. The extraordinary gifts, namely, those of working miracles, and of prophesying &c. became rarer as the faith spread, whereas the gifts which sanctify man will always remain the same.

*[See Instruction on the gifts of the Holy Ghost, Pentecost.]*

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xviii. 9—14.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves as just, and despised others. Two men went up into the Temple to pray: the one a Pharisee, and the other a Publican. The Pharisee standing, prayed thus with himself: O God, I give thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, as also is this Publican. I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I possess. And the Publican standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes towards heaven, but struck his breast, saying: O God, be merciful to me a sinner. I say to you: this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: because every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.





*Why did Christ make use of this parable of the Pharisee and the Publican?*

To teach us never proudly to condemn or despise a man, even though he should appear impious, for we may be deceived like the Pharisee who despised the Publican, whom he considered a great sinner, while, in reality, the man was justified before God on account of his repentant spirit.

*What should we do before entering a Church?*

We should reflect that we are going into the house of God, should therefore think what we are about to say to Him, and what we wish to ask of Him. That we may



make ourselves less unworthy to be heard, we should humble ourselves as did Abraham, (*Gen. xviii. 27.*) remembering that we are dust and ashes, and on account of our sins unworthy to appear before the eyes of God, much less to address Him, for He listens to the prayers of the humble only, (*Ps. ci. 18.*) and gives them His grace, while He resists the proud. (*James iv. 6.*)

*Was the Pharisee's prayer acceptable to God?*

No, for it was no prayer, but boasting and ostentation; he praised himself, and enumerated his apparent good works. But in despising others and judging them rashly he sinned grievously instead of meriting God's grace.

*Was the Publican's prayer acceptable to God?*

Yes, for though short, it was humble and contrite. He stood afar off, as if to acknowledge himself unworthy of the presence of God and intercourse with men. He stood with downcast eyes, thus showing that he considered himself because of his sins unworthy to look towards heaven, even confessed himself a sinner, and struck his breast to punish, as St. Augustine says, the sins which he had committed in his heart. This is why we strike our breast at certain times during Mass, for by this we acknowledge ourselves miserable sinners, and that we are sorry for our sins.

## ON PRIDE AND VAIN GLORY.

**W**E should learn from this gospel that God looks upon the humble and exalts them, but is far from the proud. (*Ps. cxxxvii. 6.*) The Pharisee went to the temple entirely wrapt up in himself, and the good works which he thought he had performed, but returned empty and hated by God; the Publican, on the contrary, appearing before God as a public but penitent sinner, returned justified. Truly, an humble sinner is better in the sight of God than a proud just man!

He who glories in his own good works, or performs them to please men, or to win their praise, loses his merit in the eyes of the most High, for Christ says: Take heed that you do not your justice before men, to be seen by them: otherwise you shall not have a reward of your Father who is in heaven. (*Matt. vi. 1.*)



In order that we may learn to despise vain glory, these doctrines should be well borne in mind. We should consider that it will happen to those who seek after vain glory, as to the man who made many toilsome journeys on land and sea in order to accumulate wealth, and had no sooner acquired it than he was shipwrecked, and lost all. Thus the ambitious man avariciously seeking glory and honor will find, when dying, that the merit which he might have had for his good works, is now lost to him, because he did not labor for the honor of God. To prevent such an evil, strive at the commencement of every good work which you undertake, to turn your heart to God by a good intention.

But that you may plainly recognize this vice, which generally keeps itself concealed, and that you may avoid it, know that pride is an inordinate love of ostentation, and an immoderate desire to surpass others in honor and praise. The proud man goes beyond himself, so to speak, makes far more of himself than he really is, and, like the Pharisee, despises others; the humble man, on the contrary, has a low estimate of himself, looks upon himself as nothing and, like the Publican, despises no one but himself, and thus is pleasing in the sight of God.

ASPIRATION. O God, who hearest the prayers of the humble, but dost resist the proud, I earnestly beseech Thee to give me an humble heart, that I may imitate the humility of Thy only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and thereby merit to be exalted with Him in heaven.

#### INSTRUCTION ON GRACE.

**I**N the epistle of this day the Apostle St. Paul speaks of the different gifts of the Holy Ghost which He distributes as He pleases. These extraordinary graces which the apostle mentions, are not necessary for salvation. But the Church teaches, that the grace of the Holy Ghost is necessary for salvation, because without it we could neither properly believe, nor faithfully observe the commandments of God. For the holy religion of Jesus teaches, and experience confirms, that since the fall of our first parents we are weak and miserable, and of ourselves, and by our own strength, we cannot know or perform the good necessary for our salvation. We need a higher aid, a higher assistance, and this assistance is called grace.



*What, then, is grace?*

Grace is an inward, supernatural gift which God through infinite goodness, and in consideration of Christ's merits, grants us to enable us to work out our salvation.

Grace is a gift, that is, a present, a favor, a benefit. It is an inward and supernatural gift; an inward gift, because it is bestowed upon man's soul to distinguish it from external gifts and benefits of God, such as: food, clothing, health; grace is a supernatural gift, because it is above nature. In creating our souls God gives us a certain degree of light which enables us to think, reflect, judge, to acquire more or less knowledge: this is called natural light. In the same way He gives our souls the power in some measure to overcome sensual, vicious inclinations; this power is called natural power (virtue). To this natural light and power must be added a higher light and a higher power, if man would be sanctified and saved. This higher light and higher power is grace. It is, therefore, called a supernatural gift, because it surpasses the natural power of man, and produces in his understanding and in his will wholesome effects, which he could not produce without it. For example, divine faith, divine love is a supernatural gift or grace of God, because man of his own power could never receive as certain God's revelations and His incomprehensible mysteries with so great a joy and so firm a conviction, and could never love God above all things and for His own sake, unless God assisted him by His grace.

God grants us grace also through pure benevolence without our assistance, without our having any right to it; He grants it without cost, and to whom He pleases; but He gives it in consideration of the infinite merits of Christ Jesus, in consideration of Christ's death on the cross, and of the infinite price of our redemption. Finally, grace is a gift of God, by which to work out our salvation, that is, it is only by the grace of God that we can perform meritorious works which aid us in reaching heaven. Without grace it is impossible for us to perform any good action, even to have a good thought by which to gain heaven.

From this it follows that with the grace of God we can accomplish all things necessary for our salvation, fulfil all the commandments of God, but without it we can do nothing meritorious. God gives His grace to all, and if the wicked perish, it is because they do not coöperate with its divine promptings.



*How is grace divided?*

Into two kinds, actual and sanctifying grace.

Actual grace is God's assistance which we always need to accomplish a good work, to avoid sin which we are in danger of committing, or that grace which urges us on to good, and assists us in accomplishing it; for it is God, says the Apostle Paul, (*Phil. ii. 13.*) who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish. If a good work is to be performed by us, God must enlighten our mind that we may properly know the good and distinguish it from evil; He must rouse our will and urge it on to do the known good and to avoid the evil; He must also uphold our will and increase our strength that what we wish to do, we may really accomplish.

This actual grace is, therefore, necessary for the just, that they may always remain in sanctifying grace, and accomplish good works; it is necessary for the sinner that he may reach the state of sanctifying grace.

*What is sanctifying grace?*

It is the great benefit which God bestows upon us, when He sanctifies and justifies us; in other words: sanctifying grace is the love of God, given to us by the Holy Ghost, which love dwells in us and whose temple we become, or it is the advent and abiding of God in our hearts, as promised in the words of Jesus: If any one love me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him. (*John xvi. 23.*)

He who possesses sanctifying grace, possesses the greatest treasure that a man can have on earth. For what can be more precious than to be beautiful in the sight of God, acceptable to Him, and united with Him! He who possesses this grace, carries within himself the supernatural image of God, he is a child of God, and has a right to the inheritance of heaven.

*How is this sanctifying grace lost?*

It is lost by every mortal sin, and can only be regained by a complete return to God, by true repentance and amendment. The loss of sanctifying grace is a far greater injury than the loss of all earthly possessions. How terrible, then, is mortal sin which deprives us of this treasure!

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



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 In the Introit pray with the priest for brotherly love and for protection against our enemies within and without: God in his holy place; God, who maketh men of one mind to dwell in a house: he shall give power and strength to his people. Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered; and let them that hate him flee from before His face. (*Ps. lxvii.*) Glory &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** Almighty, everlasting God, who, in the abundance of Thy loving kindness, dost exceed both the merits and desires of Thy suppliants; pour down upon us Thy mercy, that thou mayest forgive those things of which our conscience is afraid, and grant us those things which our prayer ventures not to ask. Thro'.

**EPISTLE.** (*i Cor. xv. 1—10.*) BRETHREN, I make known unto you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you have received, and wherein you stand: by which also you are saved: if you hold fast after what manner I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all, which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures: and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: and that he was seen by Cephas, and after that by the eleven. Then was he seen by more than five hundred brethren at once, of whom many remain until this present, and some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen by James, then by all the apostles. And last of all, he was seen also by me, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted



the Church of God; but by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace in me hath not been void.

INSTRUCTION. I. St. Paul warns the Corinthians against those who denied the Resurrection of Christ and exhorts them to persevere in the faith which they have received, and to live in accordance with the same. Learn from this to persevere firmly in the one, only saving Catholic faith, which is the same that Paul preached.

II. In this epistle to the Corinthians St. Paul gives us a beautiful example of humility. Because of the sins he had committed before his conversion, he calls himself one born out of due time, the least of the apostles, and not worthy of being called an apostle, although he had labored much in the service of Christ. He ascribes it to God's grace that he was what he was. Thus speaks the truly humble man: he sees in himself nothing but weakness, sin, and evil, and therefore despises himself and is therefore willing to be despised by others. The good which he professes or practices, he ascribes to God, to whom he refers all the honor. Endeavor, too, O Christian soul, to attain such humility. You have far more reason to do so than had St. Paul, because of the sins which you have committed since your baptism, the graces which you have abused, and the inactive, useless life you have led.

ASPIRATION. Banish from me, O most loving Saviour, the spirit of pride, and grant me the necessary grace of humility. Let me realize that of myself I can do nothing, and that all my power to effect any good, comes from Thee alone who alone workest in us to will and to accomplish.

GOSPEL. (*Mark* vii. 31—37.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus going out of the coast of Tyre, came by Sidon to the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coast of Decapolis. And they bring to him one deaf and dumb, and they besought him that he would lay his hand upon him. And taking him from the multitude apart, he put his fingers into his ears, and spitting, he touched his tongue: and looking up to heaven, he groaned, and said to him, Ephpheta, which is, Be thou opened: and immediately his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue





was loosed, and he spoke right. And he charged them that they should tell no man; but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal did they publish it, and so much the more did they wonder, saying: He hath done all things well: he hath made both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

*Whom may we understand by the deaf and dumb man?*

Those who desire neither to hear nor to speak of things concerning salvation.



*Why did Christ take the deaf and dumb man aside?*

To teach us that he who wishes to live piously and be comforted, must avoid the noisy world and dangerous society, and love solitude, for there God speaks to the heart. (*Osee ii. 14.*)

*Why did Christ forbid them to mention this miracle?*

That we might learn to fly from the praise of vain and fickle men.

*What do we learn from those who brought the deaf and dumb man to Jesus, and notwithstanding the prohibition, made known the miracle?*

That in want and sickness we should kindly assist our neighbor, and not neglect to announce and praise the works of God, for God works His miracles that His goodness and omnipotence may be known and honored.

SUPPLICATION. O Lord Jesus, who during Thy life on earth didst cure the sick and the infirm, open my ears that they may listen to Thy will, and loosen my tongue that I may honor and announce Thy works. Take away from me, O most bountiful Jesus, the desire for human praise, that I may not be led to reveal my good works, and thus lose the reward of my Heavenly Father. (*Matt. vi. 1.*)

## ON RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES.

*What are ceremonies?*

**R**ELIGIOUS ceremonies are certain forms and usages, prescribed for divine service, for the increase of devotion, and the edification of our fellow-men; they represent externally and visibly the interior feelings of man.

*Why do we make use of ceremonies in our service?*

That we may serve God not only inwardly with the soul, but outwardly with the body by external devotion; that we may keep our attention fixed, increase our devotion, and edify others; that by these external things we may be raised to the contemplation of divine, inward things. (*Trid. Sess. 22.*)



*Are ceremonies founded on Scripture?*

They are; for besides those which Christ used, as related in this day's gospel, in regard to the deaf and dumb man, He has also made use of other and different ceremonies: as, when He blessed bread and fishes; (*Matt.* xv. 36.) when He spread clay upon the eyes of a blind man; (*John* ix. 6.) when He prayed on bended knees; (*Luke* xxii. 41.) when He fell upon His face to pray; (*Matt.* xxvi. 39.) when He breathed upon His disciples, imparting to them the Holy Ghost; (*John* xx. 22.) and finally, when He blessed them with uplifted hands before ascending into heaven. (*Luke* xxiv. 50.) Likewise in the Old Law various ceremonies were prescribed for the Jews, of which indeed in the New Law the greater number have been abolished; others, however, have been retained, and new ones added. If, therefore, the enemies of the Church contend that ceremonies are superfluous, since Christ Himself reproached the Jews for their ceremonial observances, and said: God must be adored in spirit and in truth, we may, without mentioning that Christ Himself made use of certain ceremonies, answer, that He did not find fault with their use, but only with the intention of the Jews. They observed every ceremony most scrupulously, without at the same time entertaining pious sentiments in the heart, and whilst they dared not under any circumstances omit even the least ceremony, they scrupled not to oppress and defraud their neighbor. Therefore Christ says: God must be adored in spirit and in truth, that is, in the innermost heart, and not in external appearances only. — Do not, therefore, let the objections, nor the scoffs and sneers of the enemies of our Church confound you, but seek to know the spirit and meaning of each ceremony, and impress them on your heart, and then make use of them to inflame your piety, to glorify God, and to edify your neighbor.

INSTRUCTION CONCERNING THE ABUSE OF  
THE TONGUE.

**T**HERE is no member of the body more dangerous and pernicious than the tongue. The tongue, says the Apostle St. James, is indeed a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold how small a fire kindleth a great wood. And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is placed among our members, which defileth the whole body, and inflameth the wheel of our nativity, being set on



fire by hell. (*James* iii. 5. 6.) The tongue no man can tame: an unquiet evil, full of deadly poison. By it we bless God and the Father; and by it we curse men, who are made after the likeness of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. (*ibid.* iii. 8—10.) There is no country, no city, scarcely a house, in which evil tongues do not cause quarrel and strife, discord and enmity, jealousy and slander, seduction and debauchery. An impious tongue reviles God and His saints, corrupts the divine word, causes heresy and schism, makes one intemperate, unchaste, envious, and malevolent; in a word, it is according to the apostle a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue of the serpent seduced our first parents, and brought misery and death into the world. (*Gen.* iii.) The tongue of Judas betrayed Jesus. (*Matt.* xxvi. 49.) And what is the chief cause of war among princes, revolts among nations, if it is not the tongue of ambitious, restless men, who seek their fortune in war and revolution? How many, in fine, have plunged themselves into the greatest misery by means of their unguarded tongue? How can we secure ourselves against this dangerous, domestic enemy? Only by being slow to speak according to the advice of St. James, (i. 19.) to speak very few, sensible, and well-considered words. In this way we will not offend, but will become perfect. (*James* iii. 2.) As this cannot happen without a special grace of God, we must according to the advice of St. Augustine beg divine assistance, in the following or similar words:

ASPIRATION. O Lord, set a watch before my mouth, and a door round about my lips, that I may not fall and my tongue destroy me. (*Ps.* cxi. 3.)

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



HE Introit of the Mass is the prayer of a troubled soul, entreating God for assistance against its enemies: Incline unto my aid, O God: O Lord, make haste to help me: let my enemies be confounded and ashamed, who seek my soul. Let them be turned backward and blush for shame, who desire evils to me. (Ps. lxi.)  
Glory &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** Almighty and merciful God, of whose gift it cometh that the faithful do Thee homage with due and laudable service: grant, we beseech Thee, that we may run without stumbling to the attainment of Thy promises. Thro'.

**EPISTLE.** (ii *Cor.* iii. 4—9.) **BRETHREN,** Such confidence we have through Christ towards God: not that we are sufficient to think any thing of ourselves, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God, who also hath made us fit ministers of the New Testament, not in the letter, but in the spirit: for the letter killeth: but the spirit quickeneth. Now if the ministration of death, engraven with letters upon stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance, which is made void: how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather in glory? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more the ministration of justice aboundeth in glory.

**EXPLANATION.** St. Paul speaks in the epistle, from which this extract is taken, of the conversion of the Corinthians, which he accomplished not by his own ability, but with the help of God, who made him a minister of the New Testament, a teacher of the true religion of Christ. The New Testament by the grace of the Holy Ghost recalls the sinner from the death of sin, reconciles him to God,



and thus enlivens and makes him pleasing to God; whereas the letter of the Old Law, which contains more external ceremonies and fewer commandments, changes not the man, but rather destroys him, that is, threatens with death the transgressor of the law instead of freeing him from sin and reconciling him to God, thus permitting him to die the eternal death. St. Paul preached the true religion of Christ, which vivifies, justifies, and sanctifies man. If the ministry of Moses was so glorified by God, that his countenance shone, when he returned from Mount Sinai, where God gave him the law, how much more dignified and glorious must be the ministry of the New Law. Learn from this to esteem the office of preaching, and be humble like St. Paul, who trusted not in himself but in God, to whom he ascribed all honor.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* x. 23—37.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: Blessed are the eyes that see the things which you see. For I say to you that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them. And behold a certain lawyer stood up, tempting him, and saying: Master, what must I do to possess eternal life? But he said to him: What is written in the law? how readest thou? He answering, said: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said to him: Thou hast answered rightly: this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said to Jesus: And who is my neighbor? And Jesus answering, said: A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, who also stripped him, and having wounded him, went away, leaving him half dead. And it chanced that a certain priest went down the same way, and seeing him, passed by. In like manner also a Levite, when he was near the place and saw him, passed by. But a certain Samaritan, being on his journey, came near





him: and seeing him, was moved with compassion. And going up to him, bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine; and setting him upon his own beast, brought him to an inn, and took care of him: and the next day he took out two pence, and gave to the host, and said: Take care of him, and whatsoever, thou shalt spend over and above, I, at my return, will repay thee. Which of these three, in thy opinion, was neighbor to him that fell among robbers? But he said: He that showed mercy to him. And Jesus said to him: Go, and do thou in like manner.



*Why does Christ call His disciples blessed?*

Because they had the happiness which so many patriarchs and prophets had desired in vain, namely: of seeing Him and hearing His teaching. Though we have not the happiness to see Jesus and hear Him, nevertheless we are not less blessed than the apostles, since Christ pronounces those blessed who do not see and yet believe. (*John* xx. 29.)

*What, besides faith, is necessary for salvation?*

That we love God and our neighbor, for in these two commandments consists the whole law. (*Matt.* xxii. 40.)

*Who is our neighbor?\**

Every man, be he an acquaintance or a stranger, poor or rich, of our faith or of another; for the Samaritan did not ask the one who had fallen among robbers: Who and whence are you? but considered him his neighbor, and proved himself as such by his prompt assistance.

*How should we love our neighbor?*

As we love ourselves, that is, we should wish him everything good, and when in necessity do to him as we would wish others to do to us, and, on the contrary, not wish nor do to him anything that we do not wish to be done to ourselves. In this way the Samaritan loved his neighbor, and in this he was far superior to the priest and the Levite.

*How can we especially practice love for our neighbor?*

By the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. [*See Instruction for the Seventh Sunday after Pentecost.*] Besides which we must rejoice at the spiritual and corporal graces of our neighbor, which God communicates to him; we must grieve for his misfortunes, and, according to the example of St. Paul, (*i Cor.* i. 4.) have compassion for him; we must bear with the faults of our neighbor, as St. Paul again admonishes us: Bear ye one another's burdens, and so you shall fulfil the law of Christ. (*Gal.* vi. 2.)

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\* A detailed Instruction on the Love of God may be found under the Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost. Here we treat only of the love of our neighbor.



*Why should we love our neighbor?*

We should love him because God commands it; but there are also other reasons which should induce us to do so. We are not only according to nature brothers and sisters in Adam, but also according to grace, in Christ, and we would have to be ashamed before animals, if we would allow ourselves to be surpassed in the love which they bear one to another; (*Ecclus.* xiii. 19.) all our neighbors are the image and likeness of God, bought by the blood of Jesus, and are adopted children, called to heaven, as we are; the example of Christ who loved us, when we were yet His enemies, (*Rom.* v. 10.) and gave Himself for us unto death, ought to incite us to love them. But can we be His disciples, if we do not follow Him, and if we do not bear in us the mark of His disciples, i. e. the love of our neighbor? (*John* xiii. 35.) Finally, the necessity of the love for our neighbor ought to compel us, as it were, to it; for without it, we cannot be saved. He that loveth not, says St. John, abideth in death, (i *John* iii. 14.) and he that loveth not his brother, whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not? (i *John* iv. 20.) because he transgresses one of the greatest commandments of God, and does not fulfil the law. (*Rom.* xiii. 10.)

*What is necessary to make the love of our neighbor meritorious?*

It must tend to God, that is, we must love our neighbor only in and for God, because God commands it, and it is pleasing to Him. For to love our neighbor on account of a natural inclination, or self-interest, or some other still less honorable reason, is only a natural, animal love, in no wise different from the love of the heathens; for the heathens also love and salute those who love and salute them in turn. (*Matt.* v. 46.)

PETITION. O my God, Father of mercy! give me a loving and compassionate heart, which will continually impel me to do good to my neighbor for Thy sake, so that I may merit the same from Thy mercy.

*What is understood from this day's gospel in a higher and more spiritual sense?*

According to the interpretation of the Fathers, our father Adam, and hence the whole human race is to be understood by the one who had fallen among robbers. The human race, which through the disobedience of Adam fell



into the power of Satan and his angels, was robbed of original justice and the grace of God, and moreover, was wounded and weakened in all the powers of the soul by evil concupiscence. The priest and The Levite who represent the Old Law, would not and could not repair this misfortune; but Christ, the true Samaritan, embraced the interests of the wounded man, inasmuch as He poured the oil of His grace, and the wine of His blood into the wounds of man's soul, and thus healed him, and inasmuch as He led him by baptism into the inn of His Church, and there entrusted him to His priests for further care and nursing. Thank Christ, the good Samaritan, for this great love and care for you, and endeavor to make good use of His blessings by your cooperation.

### INSTRUCTION ON THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF EXTREME UNCTION.

*He bound up his wounds pouring in oil and wine.  
(Luke x. 34.)*

**T**HE conduct of the Samaritan in regard to the wounded man may be viewed as a figure of the holy Sacrament of Extreme Unction, in which Christ, the true Samaritan, by means of the holy oil and the prayer of the priest, His representative, dispenses His grace to the sick for the welfare of the soul and often of the body, provided the sick place no obstacle in His way.

#### *Is Extreme Unction a Sacrament?*

Yes; because it was instituted by Christ, and by it grace is conveyed to the sick through an outward sign.

#### *Did Christ institute this Sacrament?*

He did, for He sent His disciples to anoint the sick with oil and heal them, as the Evangelist writes: Going forth they preached that men should do penance: and they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them. (*Mark vi. 12, 13.*) We must believe that this unction was not invented by the apostles, but ordained by the Lord. This is confirmed by the Council of Trent, which says: (*Sess. xiv. c. 1.*) "This sacred Unction of the sick was instituted by Christ our Lord, as indicated by St. Mark, but recommended to the faithful and promulgated by the Apostle St. James, a relative of our Lord." "Is any man," he says, "sick among



you? let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man: and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven. (*James v. 14, 15.*) St. James could not have said this, if he had not known the institution and command of Christ: to it apostolic and uninterrupted tradition also gives testimony.

*What is the external sign of this Sacrament?*

The anointing with holy oil, which is blessed by the bishop on Holy Thursday, and the prayer of the priest.

*What graces does this Sacrament produce in the sick man?*

The Catechism of the Council of Trent enumerates the following: first, it remits sins, especially venial sins. Its primary object is not to remit mortal sin. For this the Sacrament of penance was instituted, as was that of baptism for the remission of original sin; secondly, it removes the languor and infirmity entailed by sin, with all other inconveniences. The time most seasonable for the application of this cure is, when we are visited by some severe malady, which threatens to prove fatal; for nature dreads no earthly visitation so much as death, and this dread is considerably augmented by the recollection of our past sins, particularly if the mind is harrowed by the poignant reproaches of conscience; for it is written: "They shall come with fear at the thought of their sins, and their iniquities shall stand against them to convict them." A source of alarm still more distressing is the awful reflection, that, in a few moments, we shall stand before the judgment-seat of God, whose justice will award that sentence, which our lives have deserved. The terror inspired by these considerations frequently agitates the soul with the most awful apprehensions; and to calm this terror nothing can be so efficacious as the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. It quiets our fear, illumines the gloom in which the soul is enveloped, fills it with pious and holy joy, and enables us to await with cheerfulness the coming of the Lord; thirdly, it fortifies us against the violent assaults of Satan. The enemy of mankind never ceases to seek our ruin: and if it be possible to deprive us of all hope of mercy, he more than ever increases his efforts, when he sees us approach our last end. This Sacrament, therefore, enables the recipient to fight resolutely and successfully against him; fourthly, it effects the recovery of health, if advantageous to the sick person.



*What intentions must the sick man have, in order to gain these graces?*

Since the Sacraments work the more powerfully the better the preparation made by those who receive them, and since by this Sacrament those sins are remitted which we have forgotten, or have not sufficiently known, the sick man should, therefore, receive beforehand, if it be possible, the holy Sacrament of Penance and the blessed Eucharist; or if this cannot be done, he should make an act of perfect contrition, and have the wish to confess if possible. He should, therefore, not defer the reception of this Sacrament to the last moment, when the violence of sickness has already taken away the use of his reason and senses, but he should ask for this Sacrament whilst yet enjoying the use of reason, so that he may receive it with devotion and salutary result.

*Is this Sacrament necessary for salvation?*

No; yet we should not neglect in case of sickness to partake of the excellent fruits of this Sacrament since the Council of Trent teaches: "To despise so great a Sacrament would indeed be a great sin, an insult to the Holy Ghost." (Sess. xiv. c. 3.)

*Can we receive this Sacrament more than once?*

We can receive it as often as we are in danger of death by sickness; but we must bear in mind that we can be anointed only once in the same sickness.

*Why is this Sacrament called Extreme Unction?*

Because among all the Sacraments which our Lord and Saviour ordained in His Church, this one is the last we are to receive. But from this it does not follow, as so many believe that one who receives this Sacrament must die soon, but it will rather become a means of salvation for their souls, and if it be for their eternal welfare, will also restore their bodily health.

*What does the priest do when he enters the house of the sick person?*

He wishes peace to the house, and prays that God may send His angels to protect its inmates, that He may drive away the enemy, console the sick, strengthen and give him health.



*Why does the priest sprinkle the sick person with holy water?*

To remind him that he should implore of God the forgiveness of his sins, with tears of contrition, in order to dispel the influence of the evil spirit.

*Why does the priest exhort those present to pray while he administers the Sacrament?*

That God may grant through their prayers whatever may contribute to the welfare of the sick man's body and soul.

*For what does the priest pray when he imposes his hands on the head of the sick person?*

He begs that God, through the imposition of hands and by the intercession of all the saints, may take the sick person under His protection, and destroy the power of the devil, who attacks one particularly in the hour of death.

*What does the priest say at the anointing with oil?*

He begs that God, through this unction and through His gracious mercy, may forgive the sick person all the sins which he has committed with his five senses. At the same time the sick person should, in a spirit of humility and with a repentant and contrite heart, implore of God the forgiveness of all his sins.

*Why does the priest present the sick person a crucifix to kiss?*

To remind him that, like Jesus, he should suffer with patience, and place his whole confidence in the infinite merits of the Crucified, and be willing to suffer and die for love of Him. For this reason the crucifix ought to be presented often to the dying person.

*What should the sick person do after he has received the Sacrament of Extreme Unction?*

He should use all his remaining strength to thank God sincerely for the benefit he has received, commend himself to the wounds and the blood of Jesus, and meditate with quiet recollection on death and eternity.

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How consoling does our holy Catholic Church appear in the continual use of this Sacrament! Having, like a tender mother, received man by holy Baptism under her maternal



care; by holy Confirmation given him the necessary weapons against sin, heresy, and infidelity; by the holy Sacrament of Penance purified him from stains and sins; and by the blessed Eucharist nourished him with the bread of life, enriched him with virtues, and secured him against falling, she does not desert him even in the last, all-important moment of death. In that dangerous hour when the dying person, forsaken by all, often by his most intimate friends, or looked upon with fear, lies on his bed of pain, when behind him time ceases and before him a certain, though unknown eternity opens itself, when Satan brings all his resources into play, in order to ruin his soul, and the thought of the coming judgment makes the heart tremble, — in this terrible hour the faithful mother, the Catholic Church, does not abandon him; she sends the priest, her servant, like a consoling angel to his couch, to encourage the sufferer and strengthen the fearful with the divine word, to cleanse the sinner and reconcile him with God by the Sacrament of Penance, to fortify the weak and nourish him with the bread of life, to strengthen the combatant with the holy oil, thus providing him with all the means of grace which Jesus obtained for His Church, to conduct his soul before the face of the eternal Judge, there to find grace and mercy.

Considering this, dear Christian, should you not feel happy to be a member of this Church, should you not thank God continually, and adhere faithfully to a Church, in which it is indeed not so pleasant to live, as in the bosom of irreligion, but in which it is good to die!

## INSTRUCTION ON THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



**P**RAY to-day at the Introit of the Mass with the Church against her enemies: Have regard, O Lord, to thy covenant, and forsake not to the end the souls of thy poor: arise, O Lord, and judge thy cause, and forget not the voices of them that seek thee. O God, why hast thou cast us off unto the end: why is thy wrath enkindled against the sheep of thy pasture? (*Ps. lxxiii.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** Almighty and everlasting God, give unto us an increase of faith, hope



and charity; and that we may obtain that which Thou dost promise, make us to love that which Thou dost command. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Gal.* iii. 16—22.) BRETHREN, To Abraham were the promises made, and to his seed. He saith not, 'And to his seeds, as of many, but as of one: And to thy seed, which is Christ. Now this I say, that the testament which was confirmed by God, the law which was made after four hundred and thirty years doth not disannul, or make the promise of no effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise. But God gave it to Abraham by promise. Why, then, was the law? It was set because of transgressions, until the seed should come to whom he made the promise, being ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not of one: but God is one. Was the law, then, against the promises of God? God forbid. For if there had been a law given which could give life, verily justice should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by the faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul in this epistle proves to the Galatians who were misled by false doctrines, and adhered too much to the Jewish Law, that they could be saved only through a lively faith in Christ, enriched by good works. Therefore he says that the great promises, made by God to Abraham, referred to Christ, through whom all nations of the earth, who would believe in Him, would be blessed and saved. (*Gen.* xii. 3., and xxii. 18.) The law, indeed, does not annul these promises, since it rather leads to their attainment, yet it must be placed after them because of their advantages, nay, even cease to exist, because the promises are now fulfilled, Christ, the promised Messiah, has really appeared and liberated man, who could not be freed from their sins by the Jewish law.

O, let us be grateful for this promise, yet more, however, for the Incarnation of Christ, whereby this promise has been fulfilled.



ASPIRATION. O God, who didst send the Promised One, and with Him hast given us all, grant that we, through a lively faith in Him, may become heirs of heaven.



GOSPEL. (*Luke xvii. 11—19.*) AT THAT TIME, AS Jesus was going to Jerusalem, he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee: and as he entered into a certain town, there met him ten men that were lepers, who stood afar off, and lifted up their voice, saying: Jesus, master, have mercy on us. Whom, when, he



saw, he said: Go, show yourselves to the priests. And it came to pass, that as they went, they were made clean. And one of them, when he saw that he was made clean, went back, with a loud voice glorifying God, and he fell on his face before his feet, giving thanks: and this was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering, said: Were not ten made clean? And where are the nine? There is no one found to return, and give glory to God, but this stranger. And he said to him: Arise go thy way; for thy faith hath made thee whole.

*What may be understood by leprosy in a spiritual sense?*

Sin, particularly impurity, by which the soul of man is stained much more than is the body by the most horrid leprosy. In the Jewish law (*Lev. xiii.*) three kinds of leprosy are enumerated, viz: the leprosy of the flesh, of garments, and of houses. Spiritually, the impure are afflicted with the leprosy of the flesh, who easily infect others, and are therefore to be most carefully avoided. The leprosy of garments consists in extravagance of dress and scandalous fashions, whereby not only individuals, but also whole communities are brought to poverty, and many lose their innocence. The leprosy of houses, finally, is to be found in those places, where scandalous servants are retained, where nocturnal gatherings of both sexes are encouraged, where obscenities are indulged in, where unbecoming dances and plays are held, and filthy actions performed; where married people allow themselves liberties in presence of others, and give scandal to their household, where they take their small children and even such as already have the use of reason, with themselves to bed, where they permit children of different sexes to sleep together, &c. Such houses are to be avoided, since they are infected with the pestilential leprosy of sin, and woe to them who voluntarily remain in them.

*Why did the lepers remain standing afar off?*

Because it was thus commanded in the law of Moses, (*Lev. xiii. 46.*) so that no one would be infected by them. From this we learn that we must carefully avoid scandalous persons and houses; for he who converses with lewd, vain and unchaste persons, will soon become like them. (*Ecclus. xiii. 1.*)



*Why did Christ send the lepers to the priests?*

This He did to show the honor due to the sacerdotal dignity and to the law of God: for it was commanded, (*Lev. xiv.*) that the lepers should show themselves to the priests, in order to be declared by them clean or unclean; He did it to try the faith, the confidence, and the obedience of these lepers: for Christ did not wish to heal them upon their mere prayer, but their cure was to cost them something, and they were to merit it by their coöperation. Their purification, therefore, was the reward of their obedience and faith. Further, Christ sent these lepers to the priests to show figuratively, as it were, that he who wishes to be freed from the leprosy of sin, must contritely approach the priest, sincerely confess his sins, and be cleansed by him by means of absolution.

*Why did Christ ask for the others, who were also made clean?*

To show how much ingratitude displeases Him. Although He silently bore all other injuries, yet He could not permit this ingratitude to pass unresented. So great, therefore, is the sin of ingratitude, hateful alike to God and man! "Ingratitude," says St. Bernard, "is an enemy of the soul, which destroys merits, corrupts virtues, and impedes graces: it is a heavy wind, which dries up the fountain of goodness, the dew of mercy, and the stream of the grace of God." "The best means," says St. Chrysostom, "of preserving benefits, is the remembrance of them and gratitude for them, and nothing is more acceptable to God than a grateful soul; for, while He daily overloads us with innumerable benefits, He asks nothing for them, but that we thank Him." Therefore, my dear Christian, by no means forget to thank God in the morning and evening, before and after meals. As often as you experience the blessing of God in your house, in your children, and your whole property, thank God, but particularly when you take in the fruits of the earth; (*Lev. xxiii. 10.*) by this you will always bring upon yourself new blessings and new graces. "We cannot think, say, or write anything better or more pleasing to God," says St. Augustine, "than: Thanks be to God."

ASPIRATION. O most gracious Jesus! who, as an example for us, wast always grateful to Thy Heavenly, Father, as long as Thou didst live upon earth, grant, that I may always thank God for all His bene-



fits, according to Thy example and the teaching of Thy servant St. Paul. (*Col. iii. 17.*)

## INSTRUCTION ON THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY ORDER.

*Go, show yourselves to the priests. (Luke xvii. 14.)*

**S**UCH honor did God show to the priests of the Old Law that He sent the lepers to them, although they could in no wise contribute to the removal of leprosy. What honor, therefore, do the priests of the New Law deserve, who through the sacerdotal ordination, have not only received from God the power to free mankind from the leprosy of the soul, but also far higher privileges.

*Is the priesthood a special and holy state, selected by God?*

Yes; this is evident from the writings of the Old as well as of the New Testament, and is confirmed by holy, apostolic tradition. In the Mosaic Law God Himself selected a particular race — Aaron and his descendants—from among the tribes of Juda, to perform solemnly the public service, to pray for the people, and instruct them in matters of religion, (*Exod. xxviii. 1.; Lev. ix. 7; Kings ii. 28.*) but particularly to offer the daily sacrifices, (*Lev. i. 11; Num. xviii.*) for which offices they were consecrated by different ceremonies, ordained by God, which ceremonies lasted seven days. (*Exod. xxviii. 4. &c. ib. xxix.*) Besides these, God instituted a sort of minor priesthood, Levites, for the service of the temple and of God; (*Num. iii. 12; viii. 6-18.*) they were of the tribe of Levi, and received no land like the other tribes, but lived on the offerings and tithes, and were consecrated like the priests. (*Num. xviii. 21.; viii. 6-26.*) This priesthood, an emblem of the real priesthood of the New Testament, was not abolished by Christ, but He brought it to its fulfilment and completed it, since He did not come to take away, but fulfil the law. For this reason Christ selected twelve apostles and seventy-two disciples from among the faithful, at the commencement of His public life, and He said to them: I have chosen you, and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit. (*John xv. 16.*) He gave them power to free man from sin, to sanctify and reconcile him with God. (*Matt. xviii. 18.*) He commanded them to preach His gospel to all nations, (*Matt. xxviii. 18-20.*) and to offer up His holy Sacrifice. (*Luke xxii. 19.*) Just as the apostles were chosen by Christ, so afterwards by the Holy Ghost



St. Paul was chosen to be an apostle, and he calls himself a minister of Christ and a dispenser of the mysteries of God, (i *Cor.* iv. 1) and who together with Barnabas was ordained. (*Acts* xiii. 2, 3.) In the same manner the apostles chose their successors, and ordained them, (i *Tim.* iv. 14.; ii *Tim.* i. 6.) and even appointed seven deacons, as assistants in the priestly office. (*Acts* vi. 1—3.) From these clear testimonies of holy Writ, it is evident that, as God in the Old, so Christ in the New Testament chose a particular class of men, and established certain grades among them, for the government of His Church, for the service of God, and the salvation of the faithful, as holy, apostolic tradition also confirms. Already the earliest Fathers, Ignatius and Clement, disciples of the apostles, write of bishops, priests, and deacons, who are destined for the service of God and the faithful. Subdeacons, ostiaries, lectors, exorcists, and acolytes, are mentioned by St. Gregory of Nazianzen, St. Justin, St. Cyprian, and many others, but particularly by the Council of Carthage in the year 398, which also gives the manner of ordaining priests.

The heretics, indeed, contend that the Roman Catholic Church robs the true believers of their dignity, since she grants the priesthood only to a certain class, and give as proofs of their assertion two texts, where St. Peter (i *Pet.* ii. 9.) calls the faithful a kingly priesthood, and where St. John (*Apoc.* i. 6.) says that Christ made us kings and priests. But these texts speak only of an internal priesthood, according to which every Christian, sanctified by baptism, who is in the state of grace, and consequently justified, and a living member of Christ, the great High-Priest, should offer spiritual sacrifices,\* that is, good works, such as prayer, mortification, charity, penance &c., on the altar of the heart, as also St. Peter, (i *Pet.* ii. 5.) St. Paul, (*Rom.* xii. 1.) and David (*Psa.* l. 19.) teach. If the assertion of the heretics were true that all believers are priests, why did God in the Old Law institute an especial priesthood, why did Christ and the apostles choose suitable men for the service of God? If all believers must be priests, why are not all kings, since St. John says, that Christ has made us kings? God, on the contrary, severely punished those who presumed to arrogate to themselves a priestly office, as He did to King Oziás, who was afflicted with leprosy because he burnt incense in the temple, which the priests alone were permitted to do. (ii *Paralip.* xxvi. 18. 19.)

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See the Instruction on Sacrifice on the fifth Sunday after Pentecost, and on Rational Worship on the first Sunday after Epiphany.



Of course heretics must make this assertion; for since they say that Scripture is the only rule of faith, and that every one can explain it, for what purpose are preachers necessary? And since they have no sacrifice, and with the exception of baptism, no Sacraments, for what purpose should they want priests? But since the sacrifice of Jesus is to continue in the Catholic Church until the end of time, since all the Sacraments instituted by Christ are still dispensed by her, and the command of Christ to teach all nations, must be carried out by her, therefore, there must be priests chosen and destined, who will perform the ministry of the Lord, and these must not only be chosen, but also be consecrated for this by a special Sacrament.

*What is Holy Order?*

Holy Order is a Sacrament by which Bishops, Priests, &c. are ordained, and receive grace and power to perform the duties belonging to their charge.

*What is the external sign, by which grace is communicated to the priests?*

The imposition of the bishop's hands, the presentation of the chalice with bread and wine, and the words by which power is given to offer the Sacrifice of the New Law, changing bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, and to forgive or retain sins. (*Conc. Flor. in Decr. Eug. et Trid. Sess. 14. c. 3. de poen. et Sess. 22. c. 1.*)

*When did Christ institute this Sacrament?*

At the Last Supper, when, having changed bread and wine into His body and blood, He said: Do this for a commemoration of me, and when after His Resurrection He said to them: As the Father hath sent me, I also send you (to free man from sin and to sanctify him). When he had said this, he breathed on them: and he said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost. (*John xx. 21. 22.*) The power to forgive and retain sins He gave them when He said: Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained. (*John xx. 23.*)

*Has Holy Order always been regarded as a Sacrament in the Church?*

Yes, for St. Paul admonishes his disciple Timothy (*Tim. iv. 14.*) not to neglect the grace conferred upon him by the imposition of hands, and in another place he ad-



monishes him, (ii *Tim.* i. 6.) to stir up the grace which was in him by the imposition of his (St. Paul's) hands. From this it follows, that St. Paul believed that the external sign of the imposition of hands of the bishops conferred a particular grace, wherein, indeed, the essence of a Sacrament consists. Therefore the Council of Trent (*Sess.* 23. *de ord. can.* 3.) declares those anathema, who contend, that Holy Order is not a real and true Sacrament, instituted by Christ, but only a human invention, or a certain form of electing the ministers of the Word of God and the Sacraments.

*Are those called to the priesthood ordained at once?*

No, they are not admitted to Holy Order until they have undergone a rigid examination regarding their vocation, moral conduct, and their knowledge of the sacred science.

*How many degrees are there in Holy Order?*

In Holy Order there are seven degrees: four lesser, and three greater. Of the lesser, the first is that of Porter, whose office is to keep the keys of the Church, sacristy, treasury, and to see that due respect is observed in the house of God: to him the bishop says, in his ordination: So behave yourself as to give an account to God of what is kept under your charge. 2. That of Lector; his office is to read aloud the lessons of the Old and New Testament, which belong to the divine office, and to instruct the ignorant in the rudiments of the Christian religion: the bishop gives him a book containing those things, and charges him faithfully and profitably to fulfil his office. 3. That of Exorcist; to him is given power to exorcise possessed persons: the bishop gives a book of exorcisms, and bids him receive the power to lay his hands on such as are possessed, whether baptized or catechumens. 4. That of Acolyte; his office is to assist the deacon and subdeacon at the altar; to carry the lights, to prepare the wine and water for consecration, and attend to the divine mysteries: the bishop gives him a wax candle, with two little cruets, bidding him light the candle, and serve wine and water in the cruets.

The first of the greater is the order of subdeacon; he serves the deacon; prepares the altar, the chalice, the bread, and the wine; he reads the epistle aloud at high Mass; the bishop before he ordains him declares that none are to receive this order, but those who will observe perpetual continency; he then gives him a chalice, paten, basin



and towel, two little cruets, and the book of epistles; bids him consider his ministry, and behave so as to please God. — The second of the greater orders is that of Deacon; his office is immediately to assist the bishop or priest at high Mass; and the administration of the sacraments. He reads the Gospel aloud at high Mass; he gives the cup when the sacrament of the Eucharist is given in both kinds; he may administer baptism, and preach the Gospel, by commission. To him the bishop gives a book of Gospels, with power to read it in the Church of God. The third is that of Priesthood, which has two degrees of power and dignity: that of bishops, and that of priests. The office of a priest is to consecrate and offer the sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ, under the forms of bread and wine; to administer all the sacraments, except Confirmation and Holy Order; to preach the Gospel, to bless the people, and to conduct them in the way to life eternal; as also to bless such things as are not reserved to the benediction of the bishop. The bishop, when he ordains a priest, anoints his hands with oil; he gives him the paten with bread upon it, and a chalice with wine, with power to offer sacrifice for the living and the dead; then he lays his hands upon him and says: Receive the Holy Ghost, whose sins &c., and performs several other ceremonies.

Learn from this instruction to honor and respect the priests, whose dignity as representatives of God, and dispensers of His mysteries, surpasses all human dignity; upon whom a load, too heavy even for angels, as St. Chrysostom says, has been imposed, namely, the care of your immortal soul; who daily enter the sanctuary before the face of the Lord, to offer the immaculate Lamb of God for the forgiveness of our sins; to whom Jesus confided the merits of His most precious blood, in order to cleanse your soul therewith in the tribunal of penance, if you confess your sins contritely; of whom God will one day ask the strictest account. Honor, therefore, these ministers of God, pray daily for the assistance of heaven in their difficult calling; particularly on the Ember-days implore God, that He may send pious and zealous priests; and if, perhaps, you know a bad priest, do not despise his high dignity which is indelibly imprinted on him, have compassion on him, pray for him, and consider that Jesus has said of such: "All things whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do: but according to their works do ye not." (*Matt. xxiii. 3.*)

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



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**A**T the Introit of the Mass excite in your heart an ardent desire for heaven, with these words: Behold, O God, our protector, and look on the face of thy Christ: for better is one day in thy courts above thousands. How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth and faineth for the courts of the Lord. (*Ps. lxxxiii.*) Glory &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** Keep, We beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy Church with Thy perpetual favor; and because without Thee the weakness of man is ready to fall, may it be withheld by Thy aid from all things hurtful, and devoted to all things profitable to salvation. Thro'.

**EPISTLE.** (*Gal. v. 16—24.*) **BRETHREN,** Walk in the spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh: for the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: for these are contrary one to another: so that you do not the things that you would. But if you are led by the spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are, fornication, uncleanness, immodesty, luxury, idolatry, witchcrafts, enmities, contentions, emulations, wraths, quarrels, dissensions, sects, envies, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I foretell to you, as I have foretold to you, that they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity. Against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified their flesh with the vices and concupiscences.



*What is it to walk in the spirit?*

It is to obey the inspirations of the Holy Ghost always, and in all things. He who does this, says St. Paul, will not do the evil works of the flesh, which are here enumerated, but he will rather suppress and mortify all sensual desires, in this manner crucify his flesh together with its vices and lusts, and make himself worthy of the fruits of the Holy Ghost, which are also mentioned; he will belong to Christ, and secure for himself eternal happiness. On the contrary, he who lives according to the flesh, that is, gives way to the desires of the flesh, has no hope of salvation.

Is it not strange, that all Christians wish to belong to Christ and become heirs of His kingdom, but are unwilling to crucify the flesh and its lusts, though Christ says to all; If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. (*Matt. xvi. 24.*)

ASPIRATION. Intercede for me, O St. Paul, that God may give me grace to crucify my flesh with its lusts, that I may have part with thee in Christ.

GOSPEL. (*Matt. vi. 24—33.*) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will sustain the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and Mammon. Therefore I say to you, be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than the meat, and the body more than the raiment? Behold the birds of the air; for they neither sow, nor do they reap, nor gather into barns, and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they? And which of you, by taking thought, can add to his stature one cubit? And for raiment, why are you solicitous? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they labor not, neither do they spin; but I say to you, that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. Now, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which is to-day, and to morrow is cast into the oven, how much more you, O ye of little faith? Be not





solicitous, therefore, saying: What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the heathens seek. For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God and his justice; and all these things shall be added unto you.

*What is meant by serving God?*

Doing the will of God, or performing faithfully and zealously all that God asks of us according to our age and condition, and for love of Him.



*Who are the two masters whom we cannot serve alike?*

God and Mammon or riches, whereby also the other goods and pleasures of the world are understood. These we cannot serve at the same time, because they command things diametrically opposed to each other; for instance, God prohibits usury, theft, deceit, &c.; to which the desire for wealth impels us. God commands that we keep holy Sundays and holydays, and devote them to His service; the desire for riches tempts man to omit religious worship and to seek temporal gain; it disturbs him even in church, so that he is only present with his body, but absent in mind with his temporal goods and business.

*To whom can riches be useful?*

To those who, like the saints, perform works of mercy with them, and thus lay up treasures for themselves in heaven.

*Why does Christ call our attention to the birds of the air and the lilies of the field?*

To excite in us confidence in the providence of God, which preserves even the birds and the flowers. Surely, if God feeds the young ravens which cry to Him; (*Ps. cxlvi. 9.*) if He nourishes the birds which neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns; if He vests the flowers of the field so beautifully, how much more will He care for man whom He has made to His own image and likeness, and adopted as His child, if he only acts as such, keeps His commandments, and always entertains a filial confidence in Him.

*Should we, therefore, lay aside all care and never work?*

This does not follow from what has been said. Christ condemns only the superfluous cares, which cause man to forget God and to neglect the salvation of his soul. Besides, God has Himself ordered (*Gen. iii. 17-19.*) that man should obtain the fruits of the earth with much labor, that he should earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. St. Paul says: If any man will not work, neither let him eat. (*ii Thess. iii. 10.*)

*What should preserve us from superfluous cares?*

A firm and lively faith, that God can and will help us. That He can is evident, because He is almighty; that



He will is certain, because He promises it in so many passages of Holy Writ, and because He is infinitely faithful to all His promises. Christ encourages us to this lively confidence with these words: All things whatsoever you ask when ye pray, believe that you shall receive and they shall come unto you. (*Mark xi. 24.*) Therefore the apostle also commands us to throw all cares upon the Lord, who provides for us. (i *Pet. v. 7.*) And why should God not care for us, since He sent us His Son and with Him all; for which reason St. Augustine says: "How can you doubt that God will give you good things, since He vouchsafed to assume evil for you!"

PRAYER. O Lord Jesus! give me a firm confidence in Thy Divine Providence, and daily increase it in me, that when in necessity I may confidently believe if I seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, the rest shall be added unto me.

### CONSOLATION IN POVERTY.

*Be not solicitous for your life. (Matt. vi. 25.)*

**I**F you were born in poverty, or accidentally, or through your own fault have become poor, be consoled, because God has sent you this poverty for your own good; for good things and evil, life and death, poverty and riches, are from God. (*Ecclus. xi. 14.*) Therefore receive it from the hand of God without impatience or murmuring, as a means by which He wishes to keep you from forgetting Him, which would, perhaps, happen if He were to bless you with temporal prosperity. Riches are a source of destruction for many. If you have brought poverty upon yourself by a licentious and sinful life, receive it in a spirit of penance as a just and salutary chastisement, and thank God that He gives you an opportunity to do penance for your sins. But if you have become poor through no fault of your own, be consoled by the example of the saints, of whom St. Paul says: they bear the unjust taking away of their goods with joy, because they know that a better and an unchangeable treasure is in store for them in heaven. (*Hebr. x. 34.*) But you should particularly take courage from the example of Christ who, being rich, became poor for us, (ii *Cor. viii. 9.*) and had not a place whereon to lay His head. (*Matt. viii. 20.*)

In your distress say with Job: The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away: as it pleased the Lord,



so it is done: blessed be the name of the Lord. Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither. (*Job. i. 21.*) Fear not my son, says Tobias, we lead indeed a poor life, but we shall have many good things if we fear God, and depart from all sins, and do that which is good. (*Tob. iv. 23.*) To serve God and to be content with few things always brings rich reward, if not in this, at least in the next life. Therefore Christ promised the kingdom of heaven to the poor in spirit, that is, not only to the humble, but also to the poor who imitate Christ in all patience and resignation. Follow, therefore, the poor Jesus, follow His poor mother, by imitating their example, and you will possess the kingdom of heaven.

### INSTRUCTION CONCERNING USURY.

*You cannot serve God and Mammon. (Matt. vi. 24.)*

**U**SURY is to demand more than legal interest from our neighbor, to whom we have lent something, or who is otherwise indebted to us. Those are also commonly called usurers, who, in times of want, hoard up necessary food, such as grain, flour, &c., and only sell it at an exorbitant price; or who buy up all such articles to sell them to the needy for enormous prices. This is a grievous sin, and usurers are threatened with eternal death, for Christ expressly prohibits lending with usury. (*Luke vi. 34, 35.*)

Usurers are the real leeches of the poor, whom they rob of their sweat and blood, and since they transgress the natural law, but still more the divine, which commands us to love our neighbor, and be merciful to the needy, they will surely not possess the kingdom of heaven. Would to God, the hard-hearted sinner might consider this, and take to heart the words of Christ: What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul! (*Matt. xvi. 26.*)

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



THE Introit of the Mass is a fervent prayer, which may be said in every necessity and adversity: Bow down thine ear, O Lord, to me, and hear me: save thy servant, O my God, that hopeth in thee: have mercy on me, O Lord, for I have cried to thee all the day. Give joy to the soul of thy servant: for to thee, O Lord, I have lifted up my soul. (*Ps. lxxxv.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Let Thy continued pity, O Lord, cleanse and defend Thy Church: and because without Thee it cannot abide in safety, govern it ever by Thy gift. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Gal. v. 25, 26.; vi. 1—10.*) BRETHREN, If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be made desirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another. Brethren, and if a man be overtaken in any fault, you, who are spiritual, instruct such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so you shall fulfil the law of Christ. For if any man think himself to be something, whereas he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every one prove his own work, and so he shall have glory in himself only, and not in another. For every one shall bear his own burden. And let him that is instructed in the word, communicate to him that instructeth him, in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for what things a man shall sow, those also shall he reap. For he that soweth in his flesh, of the flesh also shall reap corruption: but he that soweth in the spirit, of the spirit shall reap life everlasting. And in doing good,



let us not fail: for in due time we shall reap, not failing. Therefore, whilst we have time, let us work good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

EXPLANATION. This epistle is taken, like that of the Sunday before last, from the epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians, in which St. Paul shows them the insufficiency of the Jewish law, and that they can only be saved by a lively faith in Christ, but now he admonishes them to the performance of good works. You now live, he tells them, in the Spirit, that is, the Holy Ghost animates your heart by His grace, enlightens, confirms, and inflames you, admonishes and teaches you, impels your heart to do good; you must, therefore, also regulate your external conduct accordingly, and in particular devote yourself to the practice of humility and charity, as the foundations of a truly spiritual life. Humility must teach and move you to think little of yourself, to avoid vain glory, and not to confide in your own strength. But charity should impel you to be meek and compassionate to all, even sinners, to correct them charitably, and lead them back to the path of virtue; since he who is harsh to the erring, despises and treats them roughly, is often permitted by God to fall into the same, nay, even into greater sins.

Particularly you must show your charity one for another, that one bears the burdens of the other: that you bear the faults and imperfections of others just as patiently as you wish others to bear with your own imperfections; thus you will fulfil the law of Christ, which commands us to love our neighbor; you will prevent many sins which are occasioned by considering yourself perfect, raising yourself above others, criticising their failings, and causing disturbance. True glory consists in knowing ourselves, our faults and evil inclinations, and in eradicating them. Be grateful to those who instruct you in the word of God, and give to them willingly of your earthly possessions. What you sow, you shall reap; if you only follow the dictates of the flesh, do not mortify yourself, do not correct your failings, and indulge your sinful appetites, you will one day reap death, destruction and damnation, whereas, on the contrary, if you follow the dictates of the Holy Ghost, you will reap of the Spirit of life.

Let us obey this doctrine, for it is of interest to us, and impress deeply on our heart that without mortification of body and soul we cannot be saved.



ASPIRATION. O St. Paul! beg of God the grace for me, that I may always walk in humility and the love of my neighbor, particularly in bearing with his imperfections and failings, and thus fulfil the law of Christ in this as in all things.



GOSPEL. (*Luke* vii. 11—16.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus went into a city called Naim: and there went with him his disciples, and a great multitude. And when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold a dead man was carried out, the only son of his mother, and



she was a widow, and a great multitude of the city was with her. Whom when the Lord had seen, being moved with mercy towards her, said to her: Weep not. And he came near, and touched the bier. And they that carried it stood still. And he said: Young man, I say to thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother. And there came a fear on them all: and they glorified God, saying: A great prophet is risen up amongst us, and God hath visited his people.

*Why did Christ show compassion to this widow?*

To convince us that God takes sorrowful and destitute widows under His protection, and is to them a consoler and helper; and to teach us to do the same. Woe, therefore, to those who oppress them and cause them to weep. The tears and cries of widows will ascend to God, who will terribly punish the injuries inflicted upon them. (*Exod.* xxii. 22. 23.)

Christ had still other reasons for compassion, for He saw in this deceased youth the death of sinners, and in the afflicted mother the pain which the Church experiences at the spiritual loss of so many of her children. Should this not also awaken our sympathy since it was the principal cause which moved our Saviour to compassion. If we are faithful children of our mother, the Church, it is impossible for us not to share her sorrow, and we would surely not be her children, if we could contemplate without sorrow the multitude who daily die the death of sin, and thus separated from the living body of Christ, hasten to eternal destruction. O let us with the Church unceasingly ask Jesus, that He raise sinners from their spiritual death, enlighten those in error, so that all recognize the truth, find, and walk the path which leads to life!

*Why did Christ say to the widow: Weep not?*

He wished to moderate her excessive sorrow, and to teach us that we should not mourn for the loss of our relatives, like the heathens who have no hope of resurrection to eternal life. (*Thess.* iv. 12.) Resignation to the will of God, with prayer and good works, will be of more use to the dead than many tears.



*What else do we learn from this gospel?*

That no one, however young and healthy, will escape death, wherefore we should always be prepared to die.

## INSTRUCTION CONCERNING DEATH.

**I**F there were locked up in prison several hundred persons, on whom sentence of death had irrevocably been pronounced, yet who knew not the day or hour of their execution; if one after the other, and often he who least expected it, were taken out to be executed; would not each one's heart tremble, whenever the prison door opened? Now the irrevocable sentence of death is pronounced on us all; we are all locked up in our bodies, as in a prison; (*Ps. cxiv. 8.*) one after the other is called hence, yet we do not regard it. We live as though we could live forever; we think only of the body, but for the soul nothing is done, except that we load it with sins and vices.

Is this rational? The body will be food for worms, but the soul (without knowing when) will travel into the house of eternity, to which place she must bring treasures of good works, in order to live happy for ever. Who would, therefore, be so foolish as to care only for the body during life, and neglect the salvation of the soul?

O man, says St. Francis of Sales, (*Phil. part. i. chap. 13.*) represent to yourself in lively colors, that at your death the world will cease to exist with respect to you. In that last hour the pleasures, the vanities, the riches, the honors, the friendships, and all that was dear to you, will disappear before your eyes as so many shadows. O! fool that I am! you will then say, for what trifles and fooleries have I lost all! On the contrary, piety, good works, penance, &c., will appear pleasant to you, and you will exclaim: O, why did I not travel on this blessed road! Then the sins which you now consider as mere trifles, will seem to you like mountains, and all that you thought you had accomplished as great things, with regard to piety, will seem to you very little.

What terrible fear will then seize your soul, when she must travel alone into the bottomless abyss of eternity, which, as St. Bernard says, devours all possible, imaginable ages, and of which St. Gregory says, that we can easier say what it is not than what it is. What terrors will befall her, when she must appear before the tribunal of that God whom she never really loved and honored in her life-time,



and before whom she must now give the strictest account, and hear an irrevocable and just sentence!

Should not these thoughts make an impression upon you? How can you escape this terrible future? By living now, as you would wish to have lived at the hour of death. Die daily with St. Paul by crucifying the flesh and its lusts and by voluntarily withdrawing your heart from the world, its pomps and vanities, before death will do this by violence.

RESOLUTION. O world! because I cannot know the hour, in which I must leave you, I will not be attached to you. O you dear friends and relatives, you, too, I will in future love only with a holy inclination, directed to God, which will not cease with death, but remain forever. O Lord! help me, that I may die totally to myself and the world, and live only for Thee, and partake of eternal happiness.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE CEREMONIES USED AT FUNERALS.

*Behold, a dead man was carried out, the only son of his mother, — and a great multitude of the city was with her. (Luke vii. 12.)*

**O**F these people who accompanied the funeral of the youth, we should learn to pay the last honors to the dead, and follow their bodies to the grave. This is a meritorious work, one pleasing to God, if it be not performed from vanity and self-interest, but for love of God and the deceased, with the charitable intention of assisting him by prayers. Therefore those do very wrong, who from worldly motives either omit this good work entirely, or during the funeral procession indulge in idle talk and deny the deceased even a short prayer.

*Why is a cross carried before the corpse?*

By this is indicated that the deceased during life professed Christ, died believing in Him, and hoping for resurrection through Him.

*Why are lighted candles carried before the bier?*

To represent the desire of the Church that the deceased through the grace of God may be received into eternal light. This custom is very ancient; wax-candles and torches, to-



gether with prayer and great solemnity were made use of at the burial of St. Cyprian who was beheaded for Christ's sake, in the year 258 after Christ. (*Ruinart.*)

*Why are the coffin and the grave sprinkled with holy water?*

In order, as St. Thomas of Aquin (*Lib. iii. art. 21.*) remarks, to implore God, on account of the prayers which the Church says when she blesses the water, that the souls of the faithful may be cleansed from all stains, and may receive consolation and refreshment in the tortures which they may still have to suffer.

*Why are the body and the grave incensed?*

By this the Church indicates that the deceased by his Christian vocation was a good odor of Christ, (*ii Cor. ii. 14, 15.*) and admonishes the faithful that their prayers should ascend like incense to heaven for the deceased.

*Why are Psalms and other sacred canticles sung?*

This is done to remind us of the teaching of St. Paul, (*i Thess. iv. 12.*) not to be excessively sorrowful for the loss of the deceased, like the heathens who have no hope of eternal life. We also signify, thereby, that we congratulate the dead for the peace which they now enjoy. (*Apoc. xiv. 13.*) This custom, as St. Jerome shows, (*Ep. 53.*) is derived from the apostles, who interred St. Stephen, singing Psalms and hymns of praise.

*Why are the bells rung?*

To invite the faithful to the funeral and to pray for the dead who, during life-time, was called very often by the same bells, prayed with and for us during religious worship, and who is not separated from us by death.

*Why are the bodies of the faithful buried with the head towards the East and those of the priests towards the West?*

The faithful are buried towards the East, whence the sun rises, to indicate, that they are waiting for Christ who is called the Orient from on High, (*Luke i. 78.*) and whose voice they will hear at the end of the world, when He calls them to the resurrection; the priests towards the West, as a sign that on the day of judgment they will be placed opposite to the souls confided to them, to



give an account of their charge and to bear judgment for or against them.

*Why is a cross or monument erected over the grave?*

To show that the deceased was a follower of Christ, the Crucified, to admonish the passers-by to pray for him, and to remind us of the solemn moment of death.

*Why is the body laid in consecrated ground?*

This is done through reverence for the bodies of the dead which are, by baptism, temples of the Holy Ghost; to show that, even in death, they still belong to the communion of that holy Church, in which they were embodied during life by baptism, and to which they clung in faith even until death; to inspire the surviving with a holy fear lest they profane graves.

*Why is the solemn funeral service of the Church denied to heretics?*

Because they would not belong to the Church during life, and despised the holy customs and prayers of the Church for the dead. How should the blessing and prayer of the Church be useful in death to one who despised them during life.

*Why does not the Church permit criminals and suicides to be buried in consecrated ground?*

In order to express her horror for the crimes perpetrated by them, and to deter the faithful from committing similar actions.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



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At the Introit of the Mass implore with great confidence the mercy of God in the words of *Ps. lxxxv.*: Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I have cried to thee all the day; for thou, O Lord, art sweet and mild, and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon thee. Bow down thy ear to me, O Lord, and hear me, for I am needy and poor. Glory be to the Father, &c.



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Let Thy grace, we beseech Thee, O Lord, ever precede and follow us, and make us continually intent upon good works. Through &c.

EPISTLE. (*Ephes.* iii. 13—21.) BRETHREN, I pray you not to faint at my tribulations for you, which are your glory. For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom all paternity in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened by his Spirit with might unto the inward man, that Christ may dwell by faith in your hearts: that being rooted and founded in charity, you may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth: to know also the charity of Christ, which surpasseth all knowledge, that you may be filled unto all the fulness of God. Now to him who is able to do all things more abundantly than we desire or understand, according to the power that worketh in us: to him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus, unto all generations, world without end. Amen.

EXPLANATION. In the epistle of the following Sunday St. Paul tells us, that he was at the time of writing this letter in prison at Rome, whither he was brought upon the false accusations of the Jews. From prison he wrote to the Ephesians, whom he had converted to Christianity, and who zealously obeyed his counsels, in order to confirm them in their zeal and to console them in their grief on account of his sufferings which he bore for Christ's sake. ~~These~~ sufferings which I bear, he writes, redound to your honor, since I, your spiritual father, am considered by God worthy to suffer like His Son; yes, I thank the Father of our Lord Jesus for it, and beg Him on my knees, that He vouchsafe to strengthen you with His Holy Spirit, so that you overcome your evil inclinations and passions, cleanse your hearts more and more, and sanctify your souls, that if you live thus according to your faith, you may be made the habitations of Christ. He begs God also to give them a well-grounded charity, which not only loves God on ac-



count of the reward, but also on account of our sufferings, thus to become like to Christ, the Crucified. By this constant love for Jesus, even in adversities, we only comprehend with the saints the greatness of the love of Jesus, the Crucified; its breadth, since all the members of His body, all the powers of His soul were tormented with all sorts of tortures, on account of the sins of all men; the length, since He had all these sufferings for thirty-three years before His eyes, and bore them in His soul; the depth, since these tortures surpassed in intensity all which men ever suffered or will suffer; the height, since Christ on the cross saw, with the most perfect knowledge, the malice of each single sin, and the terrible insult offered to the sublime Majesty of God, and He bore the punishment for them in Himself and did penance for them. Other holy Fathers say that by these words the whole mystery of our redemption is to be understood, and, indeed, the breadth thereof is, that it is for all men; the length, that it lasts for all centuries and reaches into eternity; the height, that its contemplation takes us away from earth and raises us to heaven; the depth, that it even penetrates the kingdom of the dead. By contemplating these mysteries we learn to know the infinite love of God, to love Him more and more, and thus make ourselves partakers of His graces. — Obey the teaching of this holy apostle, contemplate the suffering Saviour and His love, endeavor to become like to Him by suffering, and when you see how the Church, her ministers, the bishops and priests, are persecuted and in tribulation, be not disheartened, but consider that the discipleship of Jesus consists particularly in suffering, that therefore, the Church and her ministers must suffer, since their Head, Jesus, has suffered. The holy Church has borne the crown of thorns of Jesus for eighteen hundred years and drank from His chalice; but like Jesus, her Head, she will triumph over all her enemies, and whilst these are hastening to destruction, she will continually live victorious until the end of time and will triumph eternally in heaven.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xiv. 1—11.) AT THAT TIME, When Jesus went into the house of one of the chiefs of the Pharisees on the Sabbath-day to eat bread, they watched him. And behold there was a certain man before him that had the dropsy. And Jesus answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying: Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day? But they held their peace: but





he taking him, healed him, and sent him away. And answering them, he said: Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fall into a pit, and will not immediately draw him out on the Sabbath-day? And they could not answer him to these things. And he spoke a parable also to them that were invited, marking how they chose the first seats at the table, saying to them: When thou art invited to a wedding, sit not down in the first place, lest perhaps one more honorable than thou be invited by him; and he that invited thee and him come and say to thee: Give this



man place: and then thou begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when thou art invited, go, sit down in the lowest place: that when he who invited thee cometh he may say to thee: Friend, go up higher. Then shalt thou have glory before them that sit at table with thee; because every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

*Why did Jesus eat with the Pharisees?*

To take occasion, as St. Cyril says, to instruct them that it is allowed to heal the sick on the Sabbath, and to show how those who give invitations to a supper, and those who are invited, should conduct themselves. The Pharisees' invitation to Jesus was not actuated by kindness, but by the desire to find something in His actions which they might criticise; Jesus, however, approaches them with meekness and endeavors to inspire them with a better intention. Beware of the spirit of criticism, and like Jesus make use of every occasion to do good, even to your enemies.

*Who may be understood by the dropsical man?*

The debauchees and misers; for the more a dropsical person drinks the more his thirst increases, so the debauchee never succeeds in satisfying his shameful lusts; the same is the case with the miser. And just as the dropsical are hard to cure, so the debauchee and miser are difficult to convert.

*Why is covetousness classed among the seven deadly sins?*

Because it is the root of many evils, (i *Tim.* vi. 10.) for it leads to usury, theft, to the employment of false weights and measures, to the suppression of justice in courts, to perjury, to the oppression of widows and orphans, nay, even to the denial of faith, as was the case with Judas. Therefore the apostle says: They that will become rich, fall into temptation, and into the snare of the devil, and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires, which drown men into destruction and perdition; and admonishes us: to fly these things: and pursue justice, godliness, faith, **charity**, patience, mildness. (i *Tim.* vi. 9, 11.)

A powerful remedy against avarice is to consider that we are not owners of what we possess, and can take noth-



ing with us in death, but must render a strict account of the use we made of our riches. (i *Tim.* vi. 7.)

## INSTRUCTION ON KEEPING SUNDAY HOLY.

*Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day? (Luke xiv. 3.)*

*Why did Christ put this question?*

**B**ECAUSE the Jews, particularly the Pharisees, were so very superstitious in keeping the Sabbath, they would not recognize Jesus as the Messiah, while He healed on the Sabbath, which was really a good work. But if the Jews were so conscientious, through superstition and hypocrisy, and considered the performing of an external good work on this day as a sin, some Christians, on the contrary, blinded by avarice and worldly pleasure, place themselves heedlessly, nay, insolently above the commandment to observe the Sabbath, and do not consider those things as wrong which are sometimes very grievous sins.

Consider, my dear Christian, you serve your body the whole week, you use all your powers for temporal business, to support yourself and your family, and God blesses you, if you work with a good intention. Now God chose one day in the week, Sunday, and in the year several other holidays, which you should devote to His service and the salvation of your soul; is it not, therefore, the greatest ingratitude to steal these days from God and your soul, and employ them to gain a transient good, or to indulge in vain, sinful pleasures? At certain times man gives rest to irrational animals, and you give the powers of your body and soul none of the rest they would and should find in quiet devotion, in prayer and meditation, in attending divine service, in receiving the holy Sacraments, &c. If you inquire whence come these shameful violations of Sundays and holidays, you will find that there is no other reason than love of gain and avarice, sinful love of pleasure, and often complete want of faith and confidence in God's providence. We wish to become rich by all means, and we do not reflect that this will not happen without the blessing of God, and that wealth is a net, in which thousands entangle themselves to their eternal perdition. We wish to live merrily and enjoy ourselves, but we do not consider that our life is only a time of penance, to attain that eternally blissful rest, of which Sunday is an emblem. We spend Sundays and holidays in idleness, vain conversations, buying and selling, servile work, or in still worse things, without experiencing the slightest scruple. But God will cover the violators of



His sacred days with confusion and shame, (*Malach. ii. 3.*) and permit many temporal evils to come upon them, as proved by daily experience. The blessing of God can never rest upon those who never care for it, but rather make themselves unworthy to receive it, by violating days consecrated to God. Let this be a warning to you.

PRAYER. O good Saviour! how manifest are meekness, and wisdom in all Thy words and actions! O, grant, that we may regulate all our actions in such a manner, that they may be acceptable to Thee and tend to the edification of our neighbor. Give us the grace to employ all the days, consecrated to Thee, for Thy honor and our salvation, that we may never raise ourselves above others, but follow Thee in all humility.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



At the Introit of the Mass the justice and mercy of God are praised: thou art just, O Lord, and thy judgment is right; deal with thy servant according to thy mercy. Blessed are the undefiled in the way; who walk in the law of the Lord. (*Ps. cxviii.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant to Thy people, we beseech Thee, O Lord, to avoid the defilements of the devil, and with a pure mind to follow Thee, the only God. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Ephes. iv. 1—6.*) BRETHREN, I, a prisoner in the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation in which you are called. With all humility and mildness, with patience, supporting one another in charity, careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. One body and one spirit, as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God, and Father



of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all. Who is blessed for ever and ever. Amen.

ADMONITION. Implore God continually for grace to accomplish and make certain your vocation by practicing these virtues, recommended by St. Paul.

### INSTRUCTION ON THE ONE ONLY SAVING FAITH.

*One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father  
of all.* (Ephes. iv. 5. 6.)

**T**HESE words of the great Apostle of the Gentiles show clearly, that it is not a matter of indifference, what faith or religion we profess. Yet in our times so poor in faith, we often hear the assertion from so-called enlightened men: "It is all the same to what religion we belong, we can be saved in any, if we only believe in God and live uprightly." This assertion is impious! Consider, my dear Christian, there is but one God, and this one God has sent only one Redeemer, and this one Redeemer has preached but one doctrine, and has established but one Church. Had God wished that there should be more than one Church, then Christ would have founded them, nay, He would not have preached a new doctrine, established a new, Christian Church; for the Jews also believed in one God. But Jesus cast aside Paganism and Judaism, promulgated a new religion, and founded a new Church. Nowhere does He speak of Churches, but always of one Church. He says that we must hear this Church, and does not add, that if we will not hear this Church, we may hear some other. He speaks of only one shepherd, one flock, and one fold, into which all men are to be brought. In the same manner He speaks always of one kingdom upon earth, just as there is only one kingdom in heaven; of only one master of the house and one family, of one field and one vineyard, whereby He referred to His Church; of one rock, upon which He would build His Church. On the day before His death, He prayed fervently to His Heavenly Father, that all who believe in Him, might be and remain one, as He and the Father are one, and He gave His disciples the express command to preach His gospel to all nations, and to teach them all things, whatsoever He had commanded them. This command the apostles carried out exactly. Everywhere they preached one and the same doctrine, establishing in



all places Christian communities, which were all united by the bond of the same faith. Their principal care was to prevent schisms in faith, they warned the faithful against heresy, commanded all originators of such to be avoided, and anathematized those who preached a gospel different from theirs. As the apostles, so did their successors. All the holy Fathers speak with burning love of the necessary unity of faith, and deny those all claim to salvation who remain knowingly in schism and separation from the true Church of Christ.

Learn hence, dear Christian, that there can be but one true Church; if there is but one true Church, it naturally follows that in her alone salvation can be obtained, and the assertion that we can be saved by professing any creed, is false and impious. Jesus who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, speaks of but one Church, which we must hear, if we wish to be saved. He who does not hear the Church, He says, should be considered as a heathen and publican. He speaks furthermore of one fold, and He promises eternal life only to those sheep who belong to this fold, obey the voice of the shepherd and feed in His pasture. The apostles were also convinced that only the one, true Church could guide us to salvation. Without faith it is impossible to please God, writes St. Paul to the Hebrews, (xi. 6.) and this faith is only one, he teaches the Ephesians. (iv. 5.) If the apostles had believed that we could be saved in any religion, they would certainly not have contended so strenuously for unity, they would not have declared so solemnly, that we should not belong to any other than to Christ alone, and that we must receive and obey His doctrine. As the apostles taught so did their successors and all the Fathers agree that there is no salvation outside of the true Church. St. Cyprian writes: "If any one outside Noah's ark could find safety, then also will one outside the Church find salvation." (*De unit. eccl. c. 7.*) From all this it follows, that there is only one true Church which insures salvation, out of which no one can be saved.

But which is this Church? The Roman Catholic, Apostolic Church, for she alone was founded by Christ, she alone was watered with the blood of the apostles and of thousands of holy martyrs, she alone has the marks of the true Church of Christ, [*see the Instruction for the first Sunday after Easter*] against which He has promised that the powers of hell shall not prevail. Those who fell away from the Church three hundred years ago, do, indeed, con-



tend that the Church fell into error and no longer possessed the true, pure gospel of Jesus. Were they right, Jesus might be blamed, for He established this Church, promising to remain with her and guide her through the Holy Ghost until the end of the world. He would, therefore, have broken His word, or He was not powerful enough to keep it. But who dare say this? On the contrary, she has existed for eighteen hundred years, whilst the greatest and most powerful kingdoms have been overthrown, and the firmest thrones crumbled away. If she were not the only true and saving Church, founded by Christ, how could she have existed so long, since Jesus Himself said: Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. (*Matt.* xv. 13.) If she were not the Church of Christ, she would have been destroyed long ago, but she still stands to-day, whilst her enemies who battled against her have disappeared, and will continue to disappear; for the gates of hell shall not prevail against her, says our Lord. He has kept His promise and will keep it, notwithstanding all the oppositions and calumnies of her implacable enemies.

You see, therefore, my dear Christian, that the Catholic Church is the only true, the only saving Church; be not deceived by those who are neither cold nor warm, and who say: "We can be saved in any religion, if we only believe in God and live uprightly," and who wish to rob you of your holy faith, and precipitate you into the sea of doubt, error, and falsehood. Outside of the Catholic Church there is no salvation; hold this firmly, for it is the teaching of Jesus, His apostles, and all the Fathers; for this doctrine the apostles and a countless host of the faithful have shed their blood. Obey the teaching of this Church, follow her laws, make use of her help and assistance, and often raise your hands and heart to heaven to thank God for the priceless grace of belonging to this one, true Church; forget not to pray for your erring brethren, who are still outside of the Church that the Lord may lead them into her, that His promise may be fulfilled: There will be one fold and one shepherd.

GOSPEL. (*Matt* xxii. 35—46.) AT THAT TIME, The Pharisees came to Jesus, and one of them, a doctor of the law, asked him, tempting him: Master, which is the great commandment of the law? Jesus said to him: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind.





This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets. And the Pharisees being gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying: What think you of Christ; whose son is he? They say to him: David's. He saith to them: How then doth David in spirit call him Lord; saying: The Lord said to my Lord, Sit on my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able



to answer him a word: neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.

*What is meant by loving God?*

It means to find one's pleasure, happiness and joy in God, because He is the highest and most perfect Good; to rejoice in His infinite majesty and glory; to direct one's thoughts, words, and actions towards Him as our only end; to do His will in all things, and be prepared always rather to lose everything, even life itself, than His friendship.

*What is meant by loving God with our whole heart, our whole soul, &c.?*

These different expressions all properly mean the same thing, namely, that we should cling to God with a true, sincere and heartfelt love, but by our heart our will may be understood, that power by which we wish God all glory, and desire nothing more than that He be known, loved, and honored by all men. The soul signifies the intellect by means of which we should endeavor to arrive at the knowledge and love of God, praise and glorify Him above all things. The mind may signify our memory, with which we continually remember God and the innumerable benefits bestowed on us by Him, praise Him for them, thank Him, and always walk irreproachably before Him. Finally, we love God with all our strength, if we employ all the powers and faculties of our body in His service, and direct all our actions to Him as to our last end.

*Is it true love, if we love God only because He is good to us?*

This is grateful love, which is good and praiseworthy, but it is not perfect love, because the motive is self-love and self-interest.

*What, therefore, is perfect love?*

When we love God only because He is in Himself the highest Good, and most worthy of all love. In this manner we should endeavor to love Him; not through self-interest, not through hope of reward, not through fear of punishment, but only because He, as the greatest Good, contains all goodness and, therefore, deserves to be loved only on account of Himself. Such love had St. Francis Xavier, which he very beautifully expressed in the following canticle, composed by himself:



O God, I give my love to Thee,  
 Not for the heaven Thou'st made for me,  
 Nor yet because who love not Thee  
 Will burn in hell eternally.  
 In dying throes on Calvary,  
 My Jesus, Thou didst think of me,  
 Didst bear the lance, the nails, the tree,  
 Rude scoffs, contempt and infamy,  
 And pangs untold, all lovingly, —  
 The scourge, the sweat, the agony,  
 And death itself, — all, all for me,

A sinner and Thy enemy.  
 Why, therefore, should not I love Thee,  
 O Jesus, dead for love of me?  
 Not that I may in heaven be,  
 Not that from hell I may be free;  
 Not urged by dread of endless pain,  
 Not lured by prize of endless gain,  
 But as Thou, Lord, didst first love me,  
 So do I love and will love Thee.  
 To Thee, my King, I give my heart,  
 For this alone that God Thou art.

*Can fear exist with love?*

Servile fear cannot, but filial fear may. Servile fear is rather a fear of punishment than a fear of offending God. Where such fear exists, love cannot dwell; for in love, writes St. Augustine, (*in Joann. Tr. 9.*) there is no fear, for perfect love casteth out fear. (*i John iv. 18.*) Filial fear, on the contrary, is the fear of offending God. This fear leads to love and is also an effect of love; it is the beginning of wisdom. (*Ecclus. i. 16.*) Let us cherish this fear, for it will drive away sin, as sentinels expel thieves; (*Ecclus. i. 27.*) it will replenish us with joy, and gladness, and obtain for us in our last moments divine blessings and a holy death. (*Ecclus. i. 11—13.*)

*How may we obtain a perfect love of God?*

By meditating on His infinite, divine perfections, such as His almighty power, His wisdom, His splendor, His beauty, &c.; by contemplating His boundless love for us, in the incarnation, sufferings, and death of His only-begotten Son; by frequently practicing this virtue; by fervent prayer; and by making acts of love, such as are found in good prayer-books.

*When should we practice the virtue of love of God?*

As soon as we have arrived at the age of reason; when the world, the devil and the flesh, endeavor to withdraw us from God, by their apparent goods and pleasures; when we have separated ourselves from God by mortal sin; when we receive the holy Sacraments, particularly holy Communion; when we receive a particular grace from God; when we use food and drink and other lawful enjoyments; when we contemplate God's creatures; often during the day; and especially in the hour of death.

[Concerning the love of our neighbor, see the twelfth Sunday after Pentecost].



*Why is the commandment to love God and our neighbor called the greatest commandment?*

Because in it are contained all the other commandments, for Christ says, in it consists the whole law. He who loves God with his whole heart, does not separate himself from God by infidelity, does not practice public or private superstition and idolatry; he does not murmur against God, does not desecrate the name of God by cursing and swearing; he does not profane the Sabbath, because he knows that all this is displeasing to God. On the contrary, he hopes in God, keeps Sundays and days of obligation holy, and observes all the commandments of the Church, because God wishes that we hear the Church; he honors his parents, inflicts no evil upon his neighbor; does not commit adultery, does not steal, calumniates no one, does not bear false witness, does not judge rashly, is not envious, malicious or cruel, but rather practices the corporal and spiritual works of mercy; and all this, because he loves God and his neighbor.

*What is the meaning of the question What think you of Christ?*

Christ asked the Pharisees this question in order to convince them, from their own answer, that He was not only the Son of David, but that He as the only-begotten Son of God was the Lord of David and of all men from eternity. (*Fs. ii. 7.*) — Unhappily, even to-day, there are men who like the Pharisees deny the **divinity** of Christ, the Son of the living God, consider Him merely a very wise and virtuous man, and do not receive His doctrine, confirmed by so many miracles. Beware, my dear Christian, of these men who rob you of the peace of the soul, and the consoling hope of a future resurrection and eternal life, together with faith in Christ, the divine Redeemer. But if you believe Christ to be the Son of God and our Lord, Law-giver, Instructor, and Redeemer, follow His teaching, and do not contradict in deed what you profess with your lips.

PRAYER. O most amiable Jesus! who hast admonished us so affectionately to love God and our neighbor, pour the fire of Thy love into our hearts, that all our deeds and actions, all our thoughts and words may begin and end with Thy love. Grant, that we may love Thee with all the powers of our body and soul, and thereby be so united to Thee, that, like St. Paul, no temptation, no tribulation, no danger, not



even death, may be able to separate us from Thee. Grant us also, that we may love our neighbors, friends, and enemies as ourselves for Thy sake, and thus be made worthy to possess Thee as our Redeemer and merciful Judge.

**WEDNESDAY FOLLOWING THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY  
AFTER PENTECOST.**

*[Ember-day.]*

LESSON. (ii *Esdras* viii. 1—10.) IN THOSE DAYS, All the people were gathered together as one man to the street, which is before the water-gate: and they spoke to Esdras the scribe, to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel. Then Esdras the priest brought the law before the multitude of men and women, and all those that could understand, in the first day of the seventh month. And he read it plainly in the street that was before the water-gate, from the morning until mid-day, before the men, and the women, and all those that could understand: and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book. And Esdras the scribe stood upon a step of wood, which he had made to speak upon: and he opened the book before all the people: for he was above all the people: and when he had opened it, all the people stood. And Esdras blessed the Lord the great God: and all the people answered: Amen, amen: lifting up their hands; and they bowed down, and adored God with their faces to the ground. Now the Levites made silence among the people to hear the law: and the people stood in their place. And they read in the book of the law of God distinctly and plainly to be understood: and they understood when it was read. And Nehemias, and Esdras the priest and scribe, and the Levites who interpreted to all the people, said:



This is a holy day to the Lord our God, do not mourn, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law. And he said to them: Go, eat fat meats, and drink sweet wine, and send portions to them that have not prepared for themselves; because it is the holy day of the Lord, and be not sad: for the joy of the Lord is our strength.

PRAYER. O Lord! send zealous priests, like Esdras, into Thy vineyard, the Church, and grant that we, like this people, may ardently listen to the word of God, which Thy ministers, the priests, preach to us, that we may sincerely bewail our sins and thus seek in Thee, our Lord, our only happiness and strength.

GOSPEL. (*Mark ix. 16—28.*) AT THAT TIME, One of the multitude speaking to Jesus, said: Master, I have brought my son to thee having a dumb spirit: who, wheresoever he taketh him, dasheth him, and he foameth, and gnasheth with the teeth, and pineth away: and I spoke to thy disciples to cast him out, and they could not. Who answering them, said: O incredulous generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him into me. And they brought him. And when he had seen him, immediately the spirit troubled him: and being thrown down upon the ground, he rolled about foaming. And he asked his father: How long time is it since this hath happened unto him? But he said: From his infancy: and oftentimes hath he cast him into the fire and into waters, to destroy him; but if thou canst do anything, help us, having compassion on us. And Jesus saith to him: If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And immediately the father of the boy crying out, with tears said: I do believe, Lord, help my unbelief. And when Jesus saw the multitude running together, he threatened the unclean spirit, saying to him: Deaf and dumb



spirit, I command thee, go out of him; and enter not any more into him. And crying out, and greatly tearing him, he went out of him, and he became as dead, so that many said: He is dead. But Jesus taking him by the hand, lifted him up, and he arose. And when he was come into the house, his disciples secretly asked him: Why could not we cast him out? And he said to them: This kind can go out by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. We beseech Thee, O Lord, support by means of Thy mercy our weak nature that, prone to evil, it may be amended by Thy goodness. Thro'.

FRIDAY FOLLOWING THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY  
AFTER PENTECOST.

[*Ember-day.*]

LESSON. (*Osee* xiv. 2—10.) THUS saith the Lord: Return, O Israel, to the Lord thy God: for thou hast fallen down by thy iniquity. Take with you words, and return to the Lord, and say to him: Take away all iniquity, and receive the good: and we will render the calves of our lips. Assyria shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more: The works of our hands are our gods; for thou wilt have mercy on the fatherless that is in thee. I will heal their breaches, I will love them freely; for my wrath is turned away from them. I will be as the dew, Israel shall spring as the lily, and his root shall shoot forth as that of Libanus. His branches shall spread, and his glory shall be as the olive-tree; and his smell as that of Libanus. They shall be converted that sit under his shadow; they shall live upon wheat, and they shall blossom as a vine: his memorial shall be as the wine of Libanus. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I will hear him, and I



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will make him flourish like a green fir-tree: from me is thy fruit found. Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know these things? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressor shall fall in them.

EXPLANATION. The Prophet Osee by command of God exhorts the people of Israel to penance, and endeavors to persuade them by describing the happiness derived therefrom. O what blessing and what joy does sincere penance give during life, and particularly in death!

*[For the gospel see the feast of St. Mary Magdalen in the second part of this book.]*

## SATURDAY FOLLOWING THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

*[Ember-day.]*

EPISTLE. (*Hebrews ix. 2—12.*) BRETHREN, There was a tabernacle made the first, wherein were the candlesticks, and the table, and the setting forth of loaves, which is called the Holy. And after the second veil, the tabernacle, which is called the Holy of Holies: having a golden censer, and the ark of the testament covered about on every part with gold, in which was a golden pot that had manna, and the rod of Aaron that had blossomed, and the tables of the testament, and over it were cherubims of glory overshadowing the propitiatory: of which it is not needful to speak now particularly. Now these things being thus ordered; into the first tabernacle the priests indeed always entered, accomplishing the offices of sacrifices. But into the second, the high-priest alone, once a year, not without blood, which he offereth for his own, and the people's ignorance: the Holy Ghost signifying this, that the way into the Holies was not yet made manifest, whilst the former tabernacle was yet standing; which is a parable of the time present: according to which



gifts and sacrifices are offered, which cannot, as to the conscience, make him perfect that serveth, only in meats and in drinks, and divers washings, and justices of the flesh, laid on them until the time of correction. But Christ being come an high-priest of the good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation: neither by the blood of goats, nor of calves, but by his own blood, entered once into the Holies, having obtained eternal redemption.

EXPLANATION. In this epistle the apostle teaches that the bloody sacrifices of the priests of the Old Law are only figures of the bloody sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, that they could produce no internal justification, and could not free from sin and death. This can be done only by Christ, who accomplished a redemption which reaches from time to eternity, by His death on the cross and by His entrance into heaven, where He continually offers the merits of His death to His Father. Thank God often and fervently for the grace of this redemption, and make yourself a partaker in it by a life of piety.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xiii. 6—17.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke to the multitude this parable: A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it, and found none. And he said to the dresser of the vineyard: Behold for these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and I find none: cut it down therefore: why cumbereth it the ground? But he answering said to him: Lord, let it alone this year also, until I dig about it, and dung it: and if happily it bear fruit; but if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down. And he was teaching in their synagogue on the Sabbaths. And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years: and she was bowed together, neither could she look upwards at all. Whom when Jesus saw, he called her unto him, and said to her: Woman, thou art delivered from thy infirmity. And he laid his hands



upon her, and immediately she was made straight and glorified God. And the ruler of the synagogue (being angry that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath) answering said to the multitude: Six days there are wherein you ought to work. In them therefore come, and be healed, and not on the Sabbath-day. And the Lord answering him, said: Ye hypocrites, doth not every one of you on the Sabbath-day loose his ox or his ass from the manger, and lead them to water? And ought not this daughter of Abraham whom Satan had bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the **Sabbath-day**? And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the things that were gloriously done by him.

PRAYER. O Lord, do not permit that we, when Thou comest and askest fruits of true penance, be found without them and be rejected by Thee; grant us rather time for penance and the grace, that faithfully following Thy footsteps, we may abound in all good works and thus be made partakers of eternal happiness. Send also holy priests into Thy Church, who have only Thy honor and the salvation of souls at heart, and by word and example lead the faithful to heaven. Amen.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

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**A**T the Introit of the Mass the Church prays for the peace which God has promised by His prophets: Give peace, O Lord, to them that patiently wait for thee, that thy prophets may be found faithful: hear the prayers of thy servant, and of thy people Israel. (*Ecclus.* xxxvi. 18.) I rejoiced at the things that were said to me: we shall go into the house of the Lord. (*Ps.* cxxi. 1.) Glory &c.



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O Lord, inasmuch as without Thee we are not able to please Thee, let Thy merciful pity rule and direct our hearts, we beseech Thee. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (i *Cor.* i. 4—8.) BRETHREN, I give thanks to my God always for you, for the grace of God that is given you in Christ Jesus, that in all things you are made rich in him, in all utterance and in all knowledge: as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that nothing is wanting to you in any grace, waiting for the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who also will confirm you into the end without crime, in the day of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul shows in this epistle that he possesses true love for his neighbor, because he rejoices and thanks God that he enriched the Corinthians with different graces and gifts, thus confirming the testimony of Christ in them, so that they could without fear expect His arrival for judgment. Do thou also rejoice, with St. Paul, for the graces given to thy neighbor, for this is a mark of true charity.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* ix. 1—8.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus entering into a boat, passed over the water, and came into his own city. And behold, they brought to him one sick of the palsy lying in a bed. And Jesus seeing their faith, said to the man sick of the palsy: Be of good heart, son; thy sins are forgiven thee. And behold, some of the Scribes said within themselves: He blasphemeth. And Jesus, seeing their thoughts, said: Why do you think evil in your hearts? whether it is easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that you may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (then said he to the man sick of the palsy): Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thy house. And he arose, and went into his house. And the multitude seeing it feared, and glorified God who had given such power to men.





EXPLANATIONS. I. Those who brought this sick man to Christ, give us a touching example of how we should take care of the sick and help them according to our ability. Christ was so well pleased with their faith and charity, that He cured the man sick of the palsy, and forgave him his sins. Hence we learn how we might assist many who are diseased in their soul, if we would lead them to God by confiding prayer, by urgent admonitions, or by good example.

II. Christ did not heal the man sick of the palsy until He had forgiven him his sins, by this He wished to teach us, that sins are often the cause of sicknesses and other evils, by which we are visited, and which God would re-



move from us if we were truly repentant. This doctrine Jesus confirmed, when He said to the man, who had been sick for thirty-eight years: Sin no more, lest some worse thing happen to thee. (*John* v. 14.) Would that this were considered by those who so often impetuously demand of God to be freed from their evils, but do not intend to free themselves from their sins, which are the cause of these evils, by a sincere repentance.

III. "He blasphemeth." Thus thought the Jews, in their perverted hearts, of Christ, because they believed that He in remitting the sins of the sick man, usurped the rights of God and thus did Him a great injury; for it is blasphemy to think, say, or do any thing insulting to God or His saints. But these Jews did not consider that they by their rash judgment calumniated God, since they blasphemed Christ who by healing the sick man, and by numerous other works had clearly proved His God-head. If Christ so severely reprimanded the Jews, who would not recognize Him as God, for a blasphemous thought against Him, what will He do with those Christians who, though they wish to be adorers of God and His Son, nevertheless, utter blasphemies, curses, and profanations of the holy Sacraments?

IV. When Jesus saw their thoughts, He said: Why do you think evil in your hearts? This may be taken to heart by those who think that thoughts are free from scrutiny, and who never think to confess their evil and shameful thoughts. God, the most Holy and most Just, will, nevertheless, not leave a voluntary unchaste, proud, angry, revengeful, envious thought unpunished, any more than an idle word. (*Matt.* xii. 36.) The best remedy against evil thoughts would be the recollection that God who searches the heart sees them, and will punish them.

PRAYER. How great, O Jesus! is Thy love and mercy towards poor sinners, since Thou not only forgavest the sins of the man sick of palsy, but calling him son, didst console and heal him! This Thy love encourages me to beg of Thee the grace, that we may rise from our bed of sins by true penance, amend our life, and through the ways of Thy commandments enter the house of eternal happiness.



## INSTRUCTION ON INDULGENCES.

*Be of good heart, son, thy sins are forgiven thee.*  
*(Matt. ix. 2.)*

**T**HE same that Christ says to the man sick of the palsy, the priest says to every contrite sinner in the confessional, and thus remits the crime or the guilt of his sins, and the eternal punishment, by virtue of the authority given him by God. But since sins not only bring with them guilt and eternal punishment, but also temporal\* and indeed spiritual or supernatural punishment, such as, painful conditions of the soul, as well in this world as in purgatory, and natural ones, as: poverty, disease, all sorts of adversities and accidents, we should endeavor to liberate ourselves from them by means of indulgences.

*What is an indulgence?*

It is a total or partial remission of the temporal punishment which man would have to suffer either in this or the next life, after the sins have been remitted.

*How do we know that after the remission of the sins there still remains temporal punishment?*

From holy Scripture; for our first parents after the forgiveness of their sin, were still afflicted with temporal punishment. (*Gen. iii.*) God likewise forgave the sins of the children of Israel, who murmured so often against Him in the desert, but not their punishment, for He excluded them from the Promised Land, and caused them to die in the desert. (*Num. xiv.*) Moses and Aaron experienced the same, on account of a slight want of confidence in God. (*Num. xx. 12., Deut. xxxii. 51. 52.*) David, indeed, received pardon from God through the Prophet Nathan for adultery and murder, (*ii Kings xii.*) still he had to endure heavy temporal punishment. Finally, faith teaches us, that we are tortured in purgatory for our sins, until we have paid the last farthing. (*Matt. v. 26.*)

*Did the Church always agree with this doctrine of Scripture?*

Yes; for she always taught, that by the Sacrament of Penance the guilt and eternal punishment, due to sin, are indeed forgiven for the sake of the infinite merits of Jesus, but that temporal punishment still remains, for which the

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\* See Instruction on Satisfaction on the fourth Sunday in Advent.



sinner must do penance. Even in the earliest ages she imposed great penances upon sinners for their sins which were already forgiven. For instance, murder or adultery was punished by a penance of twenty years; perjury, eleven; fornication, denial of faith or fortune-telling, by seven years of severe penance with fasting, &c. During this time it was not allowed to travel, except on foot, to be present at the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, or to receive the holy Eucharist. If the penitents showed a great zeal for penance and sincere amendment, or if distinguished members of the Church, particularly martyrs, interceded for them, the bishops granted them an indulgence, that is, they remitted the remaining punishment either totally or partially. In our days, on account of the weakness of the faithful, the Church is lenient. Besides the ecclesiastical, the spiritual punishments which would have to be suffered either here or in purgatory for the taking away of sins, are shortened and mitigated by indulgences through the treasure of the communion of saints.

*Has the Church the power to remit temporal punishments, or to grant indulgences?*

The Council of Trent expressly states, that the Church has power to grant indulgences, (*Sess. 25.*) and this statement it supports by the words of Christ. For as Christ protests: Amen, I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; so He also promised, that whatever the Church looses upon earth, is ratified and loosed in heaven. Whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven. (*Matt. xviii. 18.*) Even an apostle granted an indulgence. In the person and by the power of Christ, that his spirit might be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, (*ii Cor. ii. 10.; i Cor. v. 4. 5.*) St. Paul forgave the incestuous Corinthian, upon whom he had imposed a heavy punishment.

*What is meant by saying, indulgences are granted out of the treasury of the saints or of the Church?*

By this is meant that God, by the Church, remits the temporal punishment due to sin for the sake of the merits of Christ and the saints, and supplies, as it were, by these merits what is still wanting in our satisfaction.

*What kinds of indulgences are there?*

Two; plenary and partial indulgences. A plenary indulgence, if rightly gained, remits all ecclesiastical and



temporal punishment, which we would otherwise have to expiate by penance. A partial indulgence, however, remits only so many days or years of the temporal punishment, as, according to the penitential code of the primitive ages of the Church, the sinner would have been obliged to spend in severe penance. Hence the name forty day's indulgence, &c.

*What is a jubilee?\**

It is a plenary indulgence, which the pope grants to the faithful of the entire world, whereby all the temporal punishments of sin, even in cases reserved to the pope or the bishops, are remitted, and forgiven in the name of God, if the sinner confesses contritely and receives the holy Eucharist and has a firm purpose of doing penance.

*What is required to gain an indulgence?*

First, that we should be in the state of grace, and have already obtained, by true repentance, forgiveness of those sins, the temporal punishment of which is to be remitted by the indulgence; and secondly, that we should exactly perform the good works prescribed for the gaining of the indulgence.

*Do indulgences free us from performing works of penance?*

By no means: for there are few in the proper state to receive a plenary indulgence in its fulness, since not only purity of soul is necessary but also the inclination to sin must be rooted out, it therefore cannot be the intention of the Church to free us from all works of penance by granting us indulgences. She cannot act contrary to the word of Jesus: Unless you do penance, you shall all likewise perish. (*Luke* xiii. 3.) She rather wishes to assist our weakness, to supply our inability to do the required penance, and to contribute what is wanting in our penance, by applying the satisfaction of Christ and the saints to us by indulgences. If we, therefore, do not wish to do penance for our own sins, we shall have no part in the merits of others by indulgences.

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\* The word jubilee signifies deliverance, remittance. With the Jews every fiftieth year was so called, and all the prisoners and slaves were to be set free in this year, according to the command of God, the inheritances which had been sold, restored to their masters, the debts cancelled, and the earth left untilled. This was a year of grace and rest for the Jews. This jubilee of the Jews is a figure of the Catholic jubilee, in which the captives of sin and Satan are liberated, the debt of sin remitted, and the inheritance of heaven, which the sinner had sold to Satan, is restored to him.



*Can indulgences be gained for the souls of the faithful departed?*

Yes, by way of suffrage, so far as we comply with the required conditions, and thus beg of God, for the merits of His Son and the saints, to release the souls in purgatory. Whether God receive this petition or not, remains with Him, He will act only according to the condition of the deceased. We must, therefore, not depend upon the indulgences and good works which may be performed for us after death, but rather endeavor, during our life-time, to secure our salvation by leading a pious life; by our own good works and by the gaining of indulgences.

*What follows from the doctrine of the Church concerning indulgences?*

That an indulgence is no grant or license to commit sin, as the enemies of the Church falsely assert; that an indulgence grants no forgiveness of sins past or future, much less is permission given to commit sin; that no Catholic can believe that by gaining indulgences he is released from penance, or other good works, free from the fight with his evil inclinations, passions and habits, from compensating for injuries, repairing scandals, from retrieving neglected good, and glorifying God by works and sufferings; but that indulgences give nothing else than partial or total remission of temporal punishment; that they remind us of our weakness and lukewarmness which is great when compared with the zeal and fervor of the early Christians; that they impel us to satisfy the justice of God according to our ability. Finally, they remind us to thank God continually that He gave the Church a means in the inexhaustible treasure of the merits of Christ and His saints, to help our weakness, and to supply what is wanting in our penance.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



HE Introit of the Mass is: I am the salvation of the people, saith the Lord: in whatever tribulation they shall cry to me, I will hear them: and I will be their Lord for ever. Attend, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. (*Ps.* lxxvii.) Glory &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** Almighty and merciful God, graciously keep us from all things that are hurtful; that we, being set free both in mind and body, may with ready minds accomplish whatever is Thine. Thro'.

**EPISTLE.** (*Ephes.* iv. 23—28.) **BRETHREN,** Be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, who according to God is created in justice and holiness of truth. Wherefore, putting away lying, speak ye the truth every man with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Be angry, and sin not. Let not the sun go down upon your anger. Give not place to the devil. He that stole, let him now steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have something to give to him that suffereth need.

**EXPLANATION.** St. Paul admonishes the Ephesians to lay aside the old man, like a worn out garment, and put on the new man, that is, to renew their internal and external life. This renewal according to his teaching takes place, when we by a true repentance put away our vices, shun all lies, anger, injustice, &c., and adorn our soul with virtues, and zealously seek after Christian justice and perfection. We have, perhaps, already sought to change our manner of living, for which a jubilee or some other particular solemnity of the Church gave us occasion, and at that time, perhaps, purified our soul by a general confession, making the firm resolution to live for God, and work out our salvation, we appeared converted, and to have become other men: but how long did this conversion last? Ah, how soon did



we fall back into the old, sinful ways. And why? Because we lived in too great, deceitful security. We thought everything accomplished by the general confession; we were satisfied, and omitted to employ the means of remaining in the state of grace. We did not thank God for the grace of conversion; we did not ask Him for the grace of perseverance; we frequented evil company, and did not avoid dangerous occasions; we indulged in idleness and pleasures as before. How can it appear strange, if such a conversion is fruitless? Ah, we should remain in wholesome fear even after the remission of our sins. (*Ecclus.* v. 5.) Even if we could say that we have done everything, nevertheless we cannot be certain, whether we be worthy of hatred or love. (*Ecclus.* ix. 1.) We should, therefore, work out our salvation according to the advice of St. Paul (*Philipp.* ii. 12.) in fear and trembling, and thus not fall into the old life of sin, losing the hope of a new conversion.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxii. 1—14.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke to the chief priests and the Pharisees in parables, saying: The kingdom of heaven is likened to a king, who made a marriage for his son. And he sent his servants, to call them that were invited to the marriage, and they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying: Tell them that were invited, Behold I have prepared my dinner; my beeves and fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come ye to the marriage. But they neglected: and went their ways, one to his farm, and another to his merchandise: and the rest laid hands on his servants, and having treated them contumeliously, put them to death. But when the king had heard of it, he was angry: and sending his armies, he destroyed those murderers, and burnt their city. Then he saith to his servants: The marriage indeed is ready; but they that were invited were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as you shall find, call to the marriage. And his servants going forth into the ways, gathered together all that they found, both bad and good; and the marriage was filled with guests. And the king went in to see the guests; and he saw there





a man who had not on a wedding garment: and he saith to him: Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment? But he was silent. Then the king said to the waiters: Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into the exterior darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen.

*REMARK. This parable agrees in many respects with that for the second Sunday after Pentecost, and has the same meaning. See, therefore, the explanation of that gospel, as also of the feast of St. Catherine, to which may be added the following:*



**EXPLANATION.** In this parable the king is our Heavenly Father who has espoused His only-begotten Son to the Church, and on this occasion prepares the most sumptuous marriage-feast by giving the evangelical doctrine, the holy Sacraments, and the heavenly joys. The servants sent to invite the guests are the prophets, apostles and disciples of Christ. Those invited are the Jews who despised the honor and grace of the divine King, destined for them, abused and killed His servants, and were, therefore, cast aside and with their city Jerusalem, destroyed by the armies of their enemies, as a just punishment; in their stead the heathens and all those nations were called, who were on the broad road to destruction, and who now occupy the places of the unfortunate Jews at the marriage-feast of the Church, and shall also occupy them in heaven. In the Jews to whom Christ addressed this parable, is verified that many of them, nay, all are called, but few chosen, because they would not heed the invitation.

**APPLICATION.** We have the honor not only to be invited to this marriage-feast, but are in reality guests at it, because we are members of the Church of Christ by faith. "But the Christian," says St. Gregory, "who is a member of the Church by faith, but has not charity, is like to a man who comes to the marriage-feast without the wedding garment." With this garment which is charity, Christ was vested, when He came to celebrate the nuptials with His spouse; the Church, and by the bond of charity the Son of God also unites Himself with His elect. He clearly lets us know that charity is the wedding garment which should vest us. Those, therefore, who believe and are in the communion of the Church, but who do not preserve the grace of charity, are indeed in the wedding-chamber, but they are not adorned with the wedding garment. They are dead members of the Church, and shall not be admitted without this garment into the celestial marriage-feast in the triumphant Church, but rather be cast like that unfortunate guest into exterior darkness. This guest was silent, when asked by the king, why he had not the wedding garment. By this we see, that no one can excuse himself to God for not having charity, because every one can have it, if he asks it from God, and, as St. Augustine says, our heart is the workshop of charity, and every one who has a heart can practice it.

**PRAYER.** I thank Thee, O Jesus, that Thou didst call me to the marriage-feast in Thy Church; give me the wedding garment of charity that I may be present



at the celestial marriage-feast, and not be cast into exterior darkness.

## INSTRUCTION CONCERNING HELL.

*Cast him into the exterior darkness. (Matt. xxii. 13.)  
What is hell?*

**H**ELL is that place where the damned must suffer eternal punishment.

*Is there a hell?*

Yes; reason, holy Scripture and the Church teach us that there is a hell. Reason tells us that there is a just God who will punish sin. It is evident that all sins are not punished in this world; there must, therefore, be a place, where every mortal sin, not atoned for by sorrow and penance, will be punished, and this place is — hell. All nations from the beginning of the world, even those who had not the light of revelation, believed this.

But clearer still is the existence of hell shown by holy Scripture. The pious Job (x. 22.) speaks of a region of misery and darkness, where the shadows of death and no order, but where eternal terror dwells. The Prophet Isaias (xxx. 33.) says that hell is deep and wide, and that the fire burning in it, is like a stream of sulphur, ignited by the breath of the Lord. Our Saviour expressly says that those who have done evil, shall go to everlasting torment, (*Matt. xxv. 46.*) that they shall be tortured by everlasting fire. (*Matt. xxv. 41.*) He makes mention of hell, and says that an inextinguishable fire burns there, and a worm which never dies, plagues the wicked. (*Mark ix. 42. 43; Matt. x. 28.*) All the Fathers of the Church teach and testify to the same doctrine. St. Augustine, among many others, says: "The infinite wisdom of God tells us that there is a hell, and the illimitable power of God it is that punishes the damned in a wonderful, but real manner."

*Wherein do the pains of hell consist?*

Sacred Scripture and the Church teach concerning the pains of the reprobate in hell, that the damned burn there in an inextinguishable fire. (*Mark ix. 45.*) The holy doctors of the Church say, that this fire is never extinguished, and its smoke ascends or rises from century to century. "I see this fire," says St. Gregory, "as if it were gifted with reason; it makes a distinction between the guilty, and tor-



tures the damned according to the nature of their sins." This fire burns, but never consumes its victims; it communicates, as Cassiodorus says, immortality to the reprobate and lets them suffer pain, which preserves them, like salt which penetrates the flesh and keeps it from corruption, as Jesus says: Every one shall be salted with fire. (*Mark* ix. 48.) This fire does not shine, it leaves the reprobate in darkness, (*Matt.* viii. 12.) and with this fire a never dying worm continually torments the damned. This worm is not only a bad conscience, say the holy Fathers, but particularly the privation of the Beatific Vision. Eternally will the thought torment the damned: I have lost God, the only true and highest Good, I have lost Him through my fault, I have lost Him for a brief pleasure, I have lost Him forever. In hell eternity devours all time; and if after millions and millions of years a damned soul wailingly asks his companion in misery: What time is it? he receives the answer: Eternity.

Who would not fear hell, and avoid sin which incurs eternal punishment, when he reflects upon this! And yet there are many, upon whom the truth of the existence of a hell makes no impression, who even deny that there is such a place, and who say: "God is love, He can have no pleasure in the torments of His creatures, He cannot eternally punish a sin which was committed in so short a time as is the life of man." But those who speak thus, forget that God is just, that His love and mercy are indeed always ready to forgive the contrite and penitent, but that His justice must also be satisfied, when the sinner continually rejects the merciful love of God; they forget, that every grievous sin which man commits voluntarily and knowingly is an infinite, eternal insult, offered to God, which can only be atoned for by an eternal punishment. For the perverted and malicious will of a man, who dies in mortal sin, remains perverted and malicious forever, therefore he must also be punished eternally.

O my dear Christian, do not listen to such deceivers; for just on account of their sinful life, they fear hell and therefore they endeavor to free themselves from this fear by denying the existence of hell; but they cannot succeed; for Jesus, the Truth, has told us that there is a hell, and His word remains for all eternity. Endeavor rather by a pious life to escape hell, descend there in spirit frequently according to the advice of a saint, contemplate the torments of the damned, and let this reflection urge you to imitate Christ, who has promised the joys of heaven to all His faithful followers.



## CONSOLING DOCTRINE ON THE JOYS OF HEAVEN.

*The kingdom of heaven is likened to a king, who made  
a marriage for his son. (Matt. xxii. 2.)*

**H**EAVEN is compared by Christ to a marriage-feast, because we will there enjoy all imaginable pleasures in the most perfect union with God. In what these joys consist, St. Paul could not describe, although he was wrapt into the third heaven and tasted these pleasures; he only said: Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him. (i Cor. ii. 9.) Holy Writ, indeed, gives us many descriptions of the celestial joys, by comparing heaven to a paradise of bliss, sometimes to a precious pearl, or a treasure which neither rust nor moth consumes, nor thieves steal; again it represents heaven under the picture of a kingdom, a throne, a crown, whereby we are raised to the highest honor; at another time to the picture of a city which is built of gold, precious stones and pearls, lighted by the splendor of God, filled with magnificence and glory, and where the inhabitants enjoy undisturbed peace and security. These are only images or similitudes, which are taken from the most beautiful, most precious, and magnificent things of the earth, to teach us that heaven is as beautiful and pleasant a place, as we can wish and represent to ourselves, and that all possible beauty, agreeableness and joy may be found there in the highest and most perfect manner, free from evil, anxiety, disgust and fear of losing them. In heaven we will possess God Himself, the source of all joy and bliss, and will enjoy His own happiness for all eternity. More is not needed to give us the highest conception of heaven. Who would not willingly despise the vain, short and imperfect pleasures of this earth, whilst contemplating this indescribable bliss? Who would not willingly bear all the misfortunes and misery of this world, when considering that the more miserable we have been in this life the happier will we be hereafter. What would it avail us to have enjoyed all the pleasures of this world, if deprived of the pleasures of heaven in eternity!

ASPIRATION. How lovely are Thy tabernacles,  
O Lord of hosts! my soul longeth and fainteth for  
the courts of the Lord. My heart and my flesh have



rejoiced in the living God. (*Ps. lxxxiii. 2—3.*) How do I loathe the world, when I contemplate heaven. (*St. Ignatius Loyola.*)

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

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**T**HE Introit of the Mass is an humble prayer, by which we acknowledge that we are punished for our disobedience: All that thou hast done to us, O Lord, thou hast done in true judgment: because we have sinned against thee, and have not obeyed thy commandments: but give glory to thy name, and deal with us according to the multitude of thy mercy. (*Dan. iii. 28.*) Blessed are the undefiled in the way: who walk in the law of the Lord. (*Fs. cxviii.*) Glory &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord, in Thy mercy to Thy faithful pardon and peace; that they may both be cleansed from all their offences, and serve Thee with a quiet mind. Thro'.

**EPISTLE.** (*Ephes. v. 15—21.*) **BRETHREN,** See how you walk circumspectly, not as unwise, but as wise: redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore, become not unwise, but understanding what is the will of God. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is luxury: but be ye filled with the Holy Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns, and spiritual canticles, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord: giving thanks always for all things, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to God and the Father; being subject one to another in the fear of Christ.

*How may we redeem time?*

By employing every moment to gain eternal goods, even should we lose temporal advantages thereby; by letting no opportunity pass without endeavoring to do good, to labor and suffer for love of God, to improve our lives and increase in virtue.



Do you wish to know, says the pious Cornelius à Lapide, how precious time is: Ask the damned, for these know it from experience. Come, rich man, from the abyss of hell, tell us what you would give for one year, one day, one hour of time! I would, he says, give a whole world, all pleasures, all treasures, and bear all torments. O, if only one moment were granted me to have contrition for my sins, to obtain forgiveness of my crimes, I would purchase this moment with every labor, with any penance, with all punishments, torments and tortures which men ever suffered in purgatory or in hell, even if they lasted hundreds, yes, thousands of millions of years! O precious moment upon which all eternity depends! O, how many moments did you, my dear Christian, neglect, in which you could have served God, could have done good for love of Him, and gained eternal happiness by them, and you have lost these precious moments. Remember, with one moment of time, if you employ it well, you can purchase eternal happiness, but with all eternity you cannot purchase one moment of time!

ASPIRATION. Most bountiful God and Lord! I am heartily sorry, that I have so carelessly employed the time which Thou hast given me for my salvation. In order to supply what I have neglected, as far as I am able, I offer to Thee all that I have done or suffered from the first use of my reason, as if I had really to do and suffer it still; and I offer it in union with all the works and sufferings of our Saviour, and beg fervently, that Thou wilt supply, through His infinite merits, my defects, and be pleased with all my actions and sufferings.

*Be not drunk with wine, wherein is luxury!*

*[On the vice of drunkenness see the third Sunday after Pentecost. Here we will speak only of those who make others drunk by encouragement.]* The Persian King Assuerus expressly forbade that any one should be urged to drink at his great banquet. (*Esth.* i. 8.) This heathen who knew from the light of reason, that it is immoral to lead others to intemperance, will one day rise in judgment against those Christians who, enlightened by the light of faith, would not recognize and avoid this vice. Therefore the Prophet Isaias (v. 22.) pronounces woe to those who are mighty in drinking and know how to intoxicate others; and St. Au-



gustine admonishes us, by no means to consider those as friends, who by their fellowship in drinking would make us enemies of God.



GOSPEL. (*John* iv. 46—53.) AT THAT TIME, There was a certain ruler whose son was sick at Capharnaum. He having heard that Jesus was come from Judea into Galilee, went to him, and prayed him to come down, and heal his son; for he was at the point of death. Jesus therefore said to him: Unless you see signs and wonders, you believe not. The ruler saith to him: Lord, come down before my son die.



Jesus saith to him: Go thy way, thy son liveth. The man believed the word which Jesus said to him, and went his way. And as he was going down, his servants met him, and they brought word, saying that his son lived. He asked therefore of them the hour wherein he grew better. And they said to him: Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. The father therefore knew that it was at the same hour that Jesus said to him: Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.

INSTRUCTIONS. I. God permitted the son of the ruler to become sick that he might ask Christ for the health of his son, and thus obtain true faith and eternal happiness. In like manner, God generally seeks to lead sinners to Himself, inasmuch as He brings manifold evils and misfortunes either upon the sinner himself or on his children, property, &c. Hence David said: It is good for me that thou hast humbled me, that I may learn thy justifications, (*Ps. cxviii. 71.*) and therefore he also asked God to fill the faces of sinners with shame, that they should seek His name. (*Ps. lxxxii. 17.*) This happened to those of whom David says: Their infirmities were multiplied: afterwards they hastened in returning to God. (*Ps. xv. 4.*) O would we only do the same! When God sends us failure of crops, inundations, hail-storms, dearth, war, &c., He wishes nothing else than that we abandon sin and return to Him. But what do we? Instead of hastening to God, we take refuge in superstition, or we murmur against Him, find fault with or even blaspheme His sacred regulations; instead of removing our sins by sincere penance, we continually commit new ones, by murmuring and impatience, by hatred and enmity, by rash judgments, as if the injustice and malice of others were the cause of our misfortune. What will become of us if neither the benefits nor the punishments of God make us better?

II. Christ said to this ruler: Unless you see signs and wonders, you believe not. This was a reprimand for his imperfect faith; for if he had truly believed Christ to be the Son of God, he would not have asked Him to come to his house, but, like the centurion, would have believed Him able, though absent, to heal His son. (*Matt. viii.*) Many Christians deserve the same rebuke from Christ, because they lose nearly all faith and confidence in God, when He does not immediately help them in their troubles,



as they wish. He proves to us how displeasing such a want of confidence is to Him by withdrawing His assistance and protection from the fickle and distrustful. (*Ecclus.* ii. 15.)

III. How much may not the example of the father of a family accomplish! This ruler had no sooner received the faith, than his whole household was converted and believed in Christ. Fathers and mothers by their good example, by their piety, frequent reception of the Sacraments, by their meekness, temperance, modesty and other virtues, may accomplish incalculable good among their children and domestics.

### CONSOLATION IN SICKNESS.

*There was a certain ruler whose son was sick.*  
(*John* iv. 16.)

**A**S a consolation in sickness, you should consider that God sends you this affliction for the welfare of your soul, that you may know your sins; or if you be innocent, to practice patience, humility, charity, &c., and increase your merits. Therefore a holy father said to one of his companions, who complained, because he was sick: "My son! if you are gold, then you will be proved by sickness, but if you are mixed with dross, then you will be purified." "Many are vicious in health," says St. Augustine, "who would be virtuous in sickness;" and St. Bernard says: "It is better to arrive at salvation through sickness, than to have health and be damned."

It is also a powerful means of consolation in sickness, to represent to ourselves the suffering Redeemer, who had no soundness from the top of His head to the sole of His foot, and contemplating whom St. Bonaventure used to cry out: "O Lord, I do not wish to live without sickness, since I see Thee wounded so much."

When sick, we should carefully examine, whether we possess any ill-gotten goods, or have any other secret sin on our conscience; and if we are conscious of any, we should quickly free ourselves from it by a contrite, sincere confession, and by restoring the things belonging to others. Sins are very often the cause of disease, and God does not bless the medicine unless the sickness effects its object, that is, the sinners amendment. Still less can we expect help, but rather temporal and eternal misfortune, if we have recourse to superstition and spells, as the King Ochozias experienced, who was punished with death, because



in sickness he had recourse to the idol Beelzebub. (iv Kings i.)

PRAYER. O Jesus, Thou true physician of souls, who dost wound and heal us, yea, dost even permit sorrows and adversities to visit us that our souls may have health, grant us the grace to use every bodily pain according to Thy merciful designs for the promotion of our salvation.

### INSTRUCTION ON CARE OF THE SICK.

*Come down before my son die. (John iv. 49.)*

**A**LL who have the charge of sick persons, should be like this father, that is, they should first of all endeavor to call upon Jesus to come in the most holy Sacrament, before the sick person is unable to receive Him. The devil seeks to hinder nothing more than this. He excites the imagination of the sick person, making him believe that he can live longer, that he will certainly get well again, in order to ruin him easier afterwards, because he defers his conversion. Those contribute to this end who through fear of frightening the sick person or of annoying him, fail to call the priest at the right time. This is cruel love, which deprives the sick person of the salvation of his soul and eternal happiness, and brings with it a terrible responsibility. Where there is question of eternity, no carefulness can be too great. We should, therefore, choose the safest side, because the suffering may easily increase and finally make the sick person unable to attend to the affairs of his soul. We should, therefore, not conceal from him the danger in which he is, and if he has still the use of his reason, should call in the priest that he may receive the Last Sacraments. He will not die sooner on that account, but rather derive the greatest benefit therefrom, since his conscience will be cleansed from sin, which may be the cause of his sickness, and perhaps, he may regain his health, or at least be strengthened by the newly received grace of God, to bear his pains with greater patience and to die far easier, securer, and more consoled. We should also endeavor to encourage the sick person to resignation, and a childlike confidence in God, should pray with him to strengthen him against desponding thoughts, and the temptations of the devil; we should present him a crucifix to kiss; repeat the holy names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and other



consolatory ejaculations, such as are found in prayer-books; should sign him with the sign of the cross; sprinkle him with holy water, and above all pray for a happy death. We should not weep and lament, by which death is only made harder for him, nor should we hold useless, idle and worldly conversations with him which will prevent him from thinking of God and the salvation of his soul, and from preparing himself for the last dangerous struggle. Finally, we should by no means suffer in his presence persons who have given him occasions of committing sin, because they would be obstacles to his sincere conversion.

There is truly no greater work of charity than to assist our neighbor to a happy death.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



At the Introit of the Mass is said a prayer of Mardochai, which may be used in all necessities: All things are in thy will, O Lord: and there is none that can resist thy will: for thou hast made all things, heaven and earth, and all things that are under the cope of heaven: thou art Lord of all. (*Esth.* xiii. 9, 10.) Blessed are the undefiled in the way: who walk in the law of the Lord. (*Ps.* cxviii.) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Keep, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy family by Thy continued goodness: that, through Thy protection, it may be free from all adversities, and devoted in good works to the glory of Thy name. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Ephes.* vi. 10—17.) BRETHREN, Be strengthened in the Lord, and in the might of his power. Put you on the armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil: for our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wicked-



ness in high places. Therefore take unto you the armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and to stand in all things perfect. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of justice, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace: in all things taking the shield of faith, wherewith you may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one: and take unto you the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.

EXPLANATION. The apostle teaches the Ephesians how hard and dangerous a struggle every Christian has to make, not against human enemies of flesh and blood, but against spiritual, invisible enemies, who were at one time powerful princes in heaven, but through sin became princes of the darkness of this world, who govern the adherents of the world, and exercise their evil influence in the air as well as on the earth, as far as God permits them, for our chastisement or trial.

He shows us also the manner in which we can gain the victory in the evil day, that is, the time of temptation, and particularly at the hour of death, when he admonishes us to have confidence in God and gives us the weapons for the contest. We should, therefore, gird ourselves with the girdle of truth, which shows us that honor, concupiscence and riches are vain and useless; we should put on the breast-plate of justice which is made of good works; the shoes, by regulating our lives according to the precepts of the gospel, which alone can give us true peace; the shield of faith, which teaches us how richly God rewards virtue and how terribly He punishes those who succumb to temptation and sin; the helmet of salvation, namely, confidence in God and the hope of heaven; the sword of the word of God, by making use, when violently tempted, of consoling and strengthening expressions of Holy Scripture, by which we can put the devil to flight, according to the example of Christ (*Matt. iv.*) and the saints. — Let us diligently use these weapons, and we shall be victorious in this spiritual combat, and be crowned with eternal glory in heaven.

GOSPEL. (*Matt. xviii. 23—35.*) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke to his disciples this parable: The kingdom of





heaven is likened to a king, who would take an account of his servants. And when he had begun to take the account one was brought to him that owed him ten thousand talents. And as he had not wherewith to pay it, his lord commanded that he should be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. But that servant falling down, besought him, saying: Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And the lord of that servant, being moved with pity, let him go, and forgave him the debt. But when that servant was gone out, he found



one of his fellow-servants that owed him a hundred pence: and laying hold of him, he throttled him, saying: Pay what thou owest. And his fellow-servant falling down besought him, saying: Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not; but went and cast him into prison till he paid the debt. Now his fellow-servants, seeing what was done, were very much grieved: and they came and told their lord all that was done. Then his lord called him, and said to him: Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all the debt, because thou besoughtest me: shouldst not thou then have had compassion also on thy fellow-servant, even as I had compassion on thee? And his lord being angry, delivered him to the torturers until he paid all the debt. So also shall my heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother from your hearts.

*Who are understood by the king and the servants?*

The King is God, and the servants are all mankind.

*What is meant by the ten thousand talents?*

The ten thousand talents, according to our money more than ten million dollars, signify mortal sin, the guilt of which is so great that no creature can pay it; even all the works of the saints cannot make atonement, because by every mortal sin the infinitely great, good, and holy God is offended, which offence it is as impossible for any creature to cancel as it is for a poor servant to pay a debt of ten million dollars. Nevertheless God is so merciful that He remits the whole immeasurable debt of sin, on account of the infinite merits of Christ, if the sinner contritely begs forgiveness and amends his life.

*Why did the master order, not only the debtor, but also his wife and children to be sold?*

Probably because they assisted in contracting the debt, or gave occasion for its increase. This is a warning to those who in any way make themselves partakers of others' sins, either by counsel, command, consent, provocation, praise or flattery, concealment, partaking, silence and by defending ill-done things.



*What is understood by the hundred pence?*

By the hundred pence are understood the offences committed against us, and which, in comparison with our debt against God, are very insignificant.

*What does Jesus intend to show by this parable?*

That if God is so merciful and forgives us our immense debts, we should be merciful and willingly forgive our fellow-men the slight faults and offences, which they commit against us; he who does not this, will not receive pardon from God, in him will be verified the words of the apostle St. James: Judgment without mercy to him that hath not done mercy. (*James ii. 13.*)

*Who are those who throttle their debtors?*

These are, in general, the unmerciful, but particularly those who have no compassion for their debtors; those who immediately go to law and rest not until the debtor is left without house or home; those who oppress widows and orphans, if they owe them anything, thus committing one of the sins which cry to heaven for vengeance; (*Ecclus. xxxv. 18. 19.*) those who even in just lawsuits act harshly and severely with their opponent, without the slightest inclination to come to an agreement with him; finally, rulers and landlords who overburden their subjects with excessive tithes and taxes, and exact their share with the greatest rigor.

*Who are those who accuse these hardened men before God?*

They are the guardian angels and their own conscience; the merciless act itself cries to God for vengeance.

*What is it to forgive from the heart?*

It is to banish from the heart all hatred, ill-will and revengeful desires, to treasure a true and sincere love towards our offenders and enemies not only in our hearts, but also manifest it externally by deeds of charity. Therefore those have not forgiven from their hearts, who, indeed, say and believe, that they have no ill-will against their enemy, but everywhere avoid him, refuse to salute him, to thank him, to pray for him, to speak to him, and to help him in necessity, even when they might do so, but who rather rejoice at his need.



## INSTRUCTION ON THE VIRTUE OF PATIENCE.

*Have patience with me. (Matt. xviii. 26.)*

**S**INCE God has such great patience with us, ought not this to move us to have patience likewise with the faults and weaknesses of our fellow-men, and to resign ourselves patiently in all the sufferings and tribulations sent us from God! What will your impatience avail you? Will you thereby change or ease your sufferings? Do you thereby correct the faults of your neighbor? No; on the contrary, it makes suffering more oppressive, misfortune greater, and the erring neighbor more obstinate, so that he will ultimately refuse even mild and patient corrections. Besides impatience leads to many sins, to cursing, raillery, quarrelling, contention, and murder. The pious Job gives us a good example of true patience and resignation to the will of God. He was a wealthy, respected, God-fearing man in the land of Hus, the father of seven sons and three daughters, and lived peacefully and happy. God wished to try him and permitted the devil to vent his entire rage upon him. Job was deprived of his children and all his property, and, finally, he was himself afflicted with the most painful disease of leprosy. But in the midst of all these dreadful misfortunes he remained calm. Naked, covered only with a few patches, he sits on a dunghill, a picture of misery, and yet no sound of murmuring comes from his lips, he does not curse, does not blaspheme God, but says resignedly: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: as it hath pleased the Lord, so is it done: blessed be the name of the Lord. To all this misery was added the baseness of his own wife, who came and mocked him, and of three intimate friends, who instead of consoling him, judged him falsely and said, that his misery was a just punishment from heaven. Still Job did not murmur against God's wise dispensations; with unshaken patience he faithfully confided in God, and he was not forsaken. God rewarded him well for his fidelity and patience; for He restored him to health, and gave him greater wealth than he had previously. See what patience can do, what reward is in store for it! And thou a Christian, a follower of Christ, the patient, crucified Lamb, art immediately irritated, become angry and morose at every little cross which you meet! Be ashamed of your weakness, and learn from the pious Job, to practice the virtue of patience, for patience proves hope, and hope permits us not to be put to shame.





Patience always gains the victory, and will be rewarded in heaven.

If you find yourself inclined to impatience, make every morning a firm resolution to battle bravely against this vice and often ask God for the virtue of patience in the following prayer:

O God who by the patience of Thy only-begotten Son hast humbled the pride of the old enemy, vouchsafe that devoutly considering what He has suffered for us we may cheerfully bear our adversities, through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, &c.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.



At the Introit of the Mass pray with the priest for the forgiveness of your sins: If thou shalt observe iniquities, O Lord: Lord, who shall endure? for with thee is propitiation, O God of Israel. From the depths I have cried to thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. (*Ps. cxxix.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, our refuge and strength, who art the author of all goodness, hear, we beseech Thee, the devout prayers of Thy Church, and grant that what we faithfully ask we may effectually obtain. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Philipp. i. 6—11.*) BRETHREN, We are confident in the Lord Jesus, that he who hath begun a good work in you will perfect it unto the day of Christ Jesus. As it is meet for me to think this for you all, for that I have you in my heart, and that in my bands, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, you are all partakers of my joy. For God is my witness, how I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. And this I pray, that your charity may more and more abound in knowledge and in all understanding: that you may approve the better things; that you may be sincere and without offence unto the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of justice, through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

EXPLANATION. This epistle was written by St. Paul at Rome, where he was imprisoned for the faith, to the inhabitants of Philippi in Macedonia whom he had converted to the true faith. He congratulates them that they so willingly received and conscientiously obeyed the gospel which he had preached to them, and he says, he trusts in God to



complete the good work which He has commenced, and to give them perseverance until the day of Christ, that is, until death.



GOSPEL. (*Matt. xxii. 15—21.*) AT THAT TIME, The Pharisees went and consulted among themselves how to ensnare Jesus in his speech. And they send to him their disciples, with the Herodians, saying: Master, we know that thou art a true speaker, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man, for thou dost not regard the person of men: tell us, therefore, what dost thou think? Is



it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not? But Jesus knowing their wickedness, said: Why do you tempt me, ye hypocrites? Show me the coin of the tribute. And they offered him a penny. And Jesus saith to them: Whose image and inscription is this? They say to him: Cæsar's. Then he saith to them: Render therefore to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's.

*Why did the Pharisees try to ensnare Jesus in His speech?*

In order to find some reason to accuse Him before the emperor, or to make Him hated by the Jews; for had He denied tribute to Cæsar, they would have accused Him before the emperor as guilty of high treason; had He, on the contrary, made it obligatory to pay tribute, then they would have denounced Him as a destroyer of the liberty of the people, who considered themselves a free nation owing allegiance only to God. Like the Pharisees are all those who, under the appearance of friendship, only cause vexation and misfortune to their neighbor.

*Who are really hypocrites?*

Those who in order to cheat their neighbor, appear outwardly pious and holy, whilst inwardly they are full of malice; those who have honey on the tongue, but gall in the heart, and sting like scorpions, when we least expect it. Because there are so many vices connected with hypocrisy, (*Matt. xxiii.*) therefore Christ has denounced no sin more emphatically than this one. Hypocrites are brethren of Cain, Joab, and Judas, of whom the first killed his brother, the second his cousin, and the third betrayed his divine Master with a kiss. Such false men are cursed by God. (*Mal. i. 14.*) I hate a mouth with a double tongue. (*Prov. viii. 13.*) "The devil silently possesses the hearts of hypocrites and quietly sleeps in them, whilst he gives them no peace," says St. Gregory; and St. Jerome writes: "Pretended holiness is double malice." Better is an open enemy, before whom we can be on our guard, than a hypocritical friend of whom we have no suspicion, because we look upon him as a friend. Beware, therefore, my dear Christian, of the vice of hypocrisy, which is so hateful to God; endeavor always to be sincere with God, thyself and thy neighbor, and to walk in true humility before God, then mayst thou carry His image within thee.



PRAYER. Help me, O Lord, for the number of the saints is decreasing and truth is becoming rare among men. They speak vain things each with his neighbor: their lips are deceitful, and they speak with double hearts. Let the Lord destroy all those who say: We will magnify our tongue; our lips are our own; who is Lord over us? O Lord, deliver my soul from wicked lips and deceitful tongues; give me grace to preserve Thy image in my soul by piety and virtue. Direct my heart to justice and keep it from avarice, that I may give to each his own.

### INSTRUCTION ON THE FOLLY OF HUMAN RESPECT.

*Thou art a true speaker, neither carest thou for any man, for thou dost not regard the person of men.*  
(Matt. xxii. 16.)

**I**N this Christians ought especially to follow the Saviour, and not permit themselves to be deterred from piety, and the practice of virtue by fear or human respect. What matters it, what people think and say of us, if we only please God? He alone can truly benefit or injure us; therefore he alone is to be feared, as Christ says: Fear ye not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him that can destroy both soul and body in hell. (Matt. x. 28.)

How foolishly, therefore, do those act who through fear of displeasing certain people, are afraid to serve God and practice piety; who even go so far as to commit sin; who in order to be pleasing to others, oppress innocent, poor and forsaken people; who adopt the latest and most scandalous fashions and customs; those who eat meat on days of abstinence, or give it to others; those who sing sinful songs, or what is still worse, do not hesitate to ridicule sacred things to give others occasion to laugh, or in order to be considered strong-minded. Implore God daily and sincerely, that He may take from you this vain fear of men and give you instead the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom.



## INSTRUCTION ON THE VALUE AND DIGNITY OF THE SOUL.

*Whose image is this? (Matt. xxii. 20.)*

**T**HUS we should often ask ourselves with respect to our soul, particularly when we are tempted to stain and ruin it by sin, Whose image is this? We should then say to ourselves, "Is it not the likeness of God, a likeness painted with the blood of Jesus, an image for which the Saviour gave His life? Should I defile and deform this by sin and voluptuousness? God forbid!" For in truth, what among all created things, except the angels, is more beautiful and more precious than a human soul, which is in the state of grace? "Could we," says St. Catherine of Sienna, "behold with our corporal eyes a soul in the state of grace, we would see with astonishment that it surpasses in splendor all flowers, all stars, the whole world, and there is probably no one who would not wish to die for such beauty." It is a dwelling of the Blessed Trinity! Christ did not give His life for all the goods and treasures of this earth, but for the human soul. And yet many estimate their soul at such little value that they sell it for a momentary pleasure, for a present not worth a penny! For shame! The body we estimate so highly that we take all pains to decorate it and keep it alive, and the soul the image and likeness of God, we take no pains to keep in the state of grace, and adorn with virtues! What folly!

## INSTRUCTION ON THE OBLIGATION TO PAY TAXES OR TRIBUTE TO THE GOVERNMENT.

*Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. (Matt. xxii. 21.)*

**T**O pay tribute to the lawful government is a duty of justice which the Spirit of God Himself commands us faithfully to fulfil. (*Rom. xiii. 6, 7.*) Christ Himself paid the customary didrachma for Himself and St. Peter; (*Matt. xvii. 23.*) "and if the Son of God Himself paid duty and tax," says St. Ambrose, "who art thou, O man, that thou wouldst free thyself from it?" The government must watch lest the life of its subjects be at hazard, that their property be not endangered or stolen, that there be security on the highways, that peace, harmony and order be preserved among the citizens, that their temporal welfare be promoted, that science and art flourish, &c. For this, teachers,



judges, officers and soldiers are necessary, for whose support care must be taken, and whose trouble must be rewarded. Besides this the government must care for the security of the country, for public streets and bridges, and institutions necessary for the common good; to enable the government to perform these duties, taxes are necessary and lawfully assessed. If you oppose these laws, you oppose God, for by Him princes rule, and the mighty degree justice. (*Prov. viii. 16.*) Let the payment of duties be done willingly, because you pay them for love of God, and resigned to His holy will as the early Christians did, who even served their heathenish government with pleasure, in all that was not contrary to God's will, and cheerfully paid the duties.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

*REMARK. If from Pentecost until Advent there be only twenty-three Sundays, the following one is omitted, and the Mass of the twenty-fourth is said.*



THE Introit of the Mass consoles and incites us to confidence in God who is so benevolent towards us, and will not let us pine away in tribulation. The Lord saith: I think thoughts of peace, and not of affliction: you shall call upon me, and I will hear you: and I will bring back your captivity from all places. (*Jer. xxix. 11. 12. 14.*) Lord, thou hast blessed thy land: thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob. (*Ps. lxxxiv. Glory &c.*)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Absolve, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy people from their offences: that through Thy bountiful goodness we may be freed from the bonds of those sins which through our frailty we have contracted. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Philipp. iii. 17—21.; iv, 1—3.*) BRETHREN, Be followers of me, and observe them who walk so as you have our model. For many walk, of whom I have told you often (and now tell you weeping), that they are enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose



glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things. But our conversation is in heaven: from whence also we look for the Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ, who will reform the body of our lowliness, made like to the body of his glory, according to the operation whereby also he is able to subdue all things unto himself. Therefore, my dearly beloved brethren, and most desired, my joy and my crown: so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. I beg of Evodia, and I beseech Syntyche, to be of one mind in the Lord. And I entreat thee also, my sincere companion, help those women who have labored with me in the gospel with Clement and the rest of my fellow-laborers, whose names are in the book of life.

EXPLANATION. There are unhappily many Christians, who, as St. Paul complains, are declared enemies of Christ's cross, who do not wish to mortify their senses, who only think of gratifying their lusts, and, as it were, find their only pleasure, even seek their honor, in despising the followers of Jesus and His saints on the narrow path of the cross, of mortification and humiliation. What will be the end of these people? Eternal perdition! For he who does not crucify the flesh, does not belong to Christ. (*Gal. v. 24.*) He who does not bear the marks of the mortification of Jesus in his body, in him the life of Christ shall not be manifested. (ii *Cor. iv. 10.*) He who does not walk in heaven during his life-time, that is, who does not direct his thoughts and desires heavenward, and despise the world and its vanities, will not find admission there after his death.

ASPIRATION. Would to God, I could say with St. Paul: The world is crucified to me, and I to the world. (*Gal. vi. 14.*)

GOSPEL. (*Matt. ix. 18—26.*) AT THAT TIME, AS Jesus was speaking to the multitudes, behold, a certain ruler came up, and adored him, saying: Lord, my daughter is even now dead: but come, lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. And Jesus, rising up, followed him, with his disciples. And behold, a woman, who was troubled with an issue of blood twelve years,





came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment. For she said within herself: If I shall touch only his garment, I shall be healed. But Jesus turning and seeing her, said: Be of good heart, daughter: thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour. And when Jesus was come into the house of the ruler, and saw the minstrels and the multitude making a tumult, he said: Give place: for the girl is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. And when the multitude was put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand.



And the maid arose. And the fame hereof went abroad into all that country.

INSTRUCTIONS. I. Filial was the faith, unbounded the confidence, profound the humility of this woman, and, therefore, she received health also. Learn from this, how pleasing to the Lord is faith, confidence and humility; let your prayer always be penetrated by these three virtues, and you will receive whatever you ask.

II. The devout Louis de Ponte compares the conduct of this woman to our conduct at holy Communion, and says: Christ wished to remain with us in the most holy Eucharist, clothed with the garment of the sacramental species of bread, that he who receives His sacred flesh and blood, may be freed from evil concupiscence. If you wish to obtain the health of your soul, as did this woman the health of the body, imitate her. Receive the flesh and blood of Jesus with the most profound humility, with the firmest confidence in His power and goodness, and like this woman you too will be made whole.

III. Jesus called three dead persons to life, the twelve year old daughter of Jairus, ruler of the synagogue, of whom there is mention made in this gospel, the young man at Naim, (*Luke vii. 14.*) and Lazarus. (*John. xi. 43.*) By these three dead persons three classes of sinners may be understood: the maiden signifies those who sin in their youth through weakness and frailty, but touched by the grace of God, perceive their fall and easily rise again through penance; by the young man at Naim those are to be understood who sin repeatedly and in public, these require greater grace, more labor and severer penance; by Lazarus, the public and obdurate habitual sinners are to be understood, who can be raised to spiritual life only by extraordinary graces and severe public penance.

IV. Christ did not raise the maiden, until the minstrels and noisy multitude were removed, by which He wished to teach us that the conversion of a soul cannot be accomplished in the midst of the noise and turmoil of temporal cares, idle pleasures and associations.

## INSTRUCTION CONCERNING RIDICULE AND DERISION.

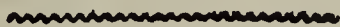
*And they laughed him to scorn. (Matt. ix. 24.)*

**W**HEN Jesus told the minstrels and the crowd that the girl was not dead, but sleeping, they laughed at Him, because they understood not the meaning of His



words. Sensual-minded men generally act in the same manner towards the priests and ministers of God, who by their word and example admonish them to despise honors, riches and pleasures, and to embrace the love of poverty, humility and mortification. This is an unintelligible and hateful language to them which they ridicule and mock, just as they do when they hear that death is a sleep, from which we shall one day awake and be obliged to appear before the judgment-seat of God. Woe to such scoffers by whose ridicule so many souls are led from the path of virtue! What the devil formerly accomplished by tyrants in estranging men from God and a lively faith in Him and His Church, he seems to wish to accomplish in our days by the mockery, scoffs, and blasphemies of wicked men; for at no period have piety and virtue, holy simplicity and childlike faith, adherence to the holy Roman Church and her laws, reverence for her head, her ministers and priests, been more mocked, derided and blasphemed. Unhappily many permit themselves to be induced by mockery to abandon piety, to omit the public practice of their faith, to conceal their Catholic conviction, and to lead a lukewarm, careless, indeed, sinful life. Woe to the scoffers! they are an abomination to the Lord (*Prov. iii. 32.*) who will one day require from their hands all the souls perverted by them. Do not permit yourself to be led astray by those who ridicule your faith and zeal for virtue; remember the words of Jesus: He that shall deny me before men, I will also deny him before my Father who is in heaven. (*Matt. x. 33.*) Let Jesus be your consolation, He was scoffed and blasphemed for your sake, and often say within yourself:

I know, my most amiable Jesus, that the servant cannot be more than his master. Since Thou wert so often sneered at, mocked and blasphemed, why should I wonder if I am derided for my faith in Thee and Thy Church, and for the practice of virtue!





## INSTRUCTION ON THE TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

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*REMARK. The Mass of this Sunday is always the last, even if there are more than twenty-four Sundays after Pentecost; in that case the Sundays remaining after Epiphany, which are noticed in the calendar, are inserted between the twenty-third and the Mass of the twenty-fourth Sunday.*

**T**HE Introit of the Mass is the same as that said on the twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** Quicken, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the wills of Thy faithful: that they, more earnestly seeking after the fruit of divine grace, may more abundantly receive the healing gifts of Thy mercy. Thro'.

**EPISTLE.** (*Col. i. 9—14.*) **BRETHREN,** We cease not to pray for you, and to beg that you may be filled with the knowledge of the will of God, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding: that you may walk worthy of God, in all things pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God: strengthened with all might according to the power of his glory, in all patience and long-suffering with joy, giving thanks to God the Father, who hath made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the remission of sins.

**EXPLANATION.** In this epistle St. Paul teaches us to pray for our neighbor, and to thank God especially for the light of the true, only saving faith. Let us endeavor to imitate St. Paul in his love and zeal for the salvation of souls, then we shall also one day partake of his glorious reward in heaven.

**GOSPEL.** (*Matt. xxiv. 15—35.*) **AT THAT TIME,** Jesus said to his disciples: When you shall see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by





Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place: he that readeth, let him understand: then they that are in Judea, let them flee to the mountains: and he that is on the house-top, let him not come down to take anything out of his house: and he that is in the field, let him not go back to take his coat. And woe to them that are with child, and that give suck, in those days. But pray that your flight be not in the winter, or on the Sabbath. For there shall be then great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, neither shall be: and



unless those days had been shortened, no flesh should be saved: but for the sake of the elect, those days shall be shortened. Then, if any man shall say to you: Lo, here is Christ, or there: do not believe him: for there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch as to deceive (if possible) even the elect. Behold, I have told it to you before hand: if therefore they shall say to you: Behold, he is in the desert, go ye not out; Behold, he is in the closets, believe it not. For as lightning cometh out of the east, and appeareth even into the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Wheresoever the body shall be, there shall the eagles also be gathered together. And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be moved: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with much power and majesty: and he shall send his angels with a trumpet and a great voice, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the farthest parts of the heavens to the utmost bounds of them. And from the fig-tree learn a parable: when the branch thereof is now tender, and the leaves come forth, you know that summer is nigh. So you also, when you shall see all these things, know ye that it is nigh, even at the doors. Amen I say to you, that this generation shall not pass till all these things be done. Heaven and earth shall pass, but my words shall not pass.

EXPLANATION. When you shall see the abomination of desolation. The abomination of desolation of which Daniel (ix. 27.) and Christ here speak, is the desecration of the temple and the city of Jerusalem by the



rebellious Jews by perpetrating the most abominable vices, injustices and robberies, &c., but principally by the pagan Romans by putting up their idols. This destruction which was accomplished in the most fearful manner about forty years after the death of Christ, was foretold by Him according to the testimony of St. Luke. (xxi. 20.) At the same time He speaks of the end of the world and of His coming to judgment, of which the desolation of Jerusalem was a figure.

Pray that your flight be not in the winter or on the Sabbath. Because, as St. Jerome says, the severe cold which reigns in the deserts and mountains would prevent the people from going thither to seek security, and because it was forbidden by the law for the Jews to travel on the Sabbath.

There shall rise false Christs and false prophets. According to the testimony of the Jewish historian Josephus, who was an eye-witness of the destruction of Jerusalem, Eleazar, John, Simon, &c., were such false prophets who under the pretence of helping the Jews, brought them into still greater misfortunes; before the end of the world it will be Antichrist with his followers, whom St. Paul calls the man of sin and the son of perdition, (ii *Thess.* ii. 3.) on account of his diabolical malice and cruelty. He will rise up, sit in the temple, proclaim himself God, and kill all who will not recognize him as such. His splendor, his promises and his false miracles will be such that even the holy and just will be in danger of being seduced, but for their sake God will shorten these days of persecution.

Wheresoever the body shall be, there shall the eagles also be gathered together. That is, where the wicked are, who have aimed at spiritual corruption, there punishment will overtake and destroy them.

This generation shall not pass till all these things be done. By these words Christ defines the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, and says that many of His hearers would live to see it, which also happened. But when the end of the world will come, He says, not even the angels in heaven know. (*Matt.* xxiv. 36.) Let us endeavor to be always ready by leading a holy life, for the coming of the divine Judge, and meditate often on the words of our divine Lord: Heaven and earth shall pass, but my words shall not pass.

*(See the account of the Destruction of Jerusalem on the Ninth Sunday after Pentecost.)*



PRAYER. Remove from us, O Lord, all that is calculated to rob us of Thy love. Break the bonds with which we are tied to the world, that we may not be lost with it. Give us the wings of eagles that we may soar above all worldly things by the contemplation of Thy sufferings, life and death, that we may hasten towards Thee now, and gather about Thee, that we may not become a prey to the rapacious enemy on the day of judgment. Amen.

### INSTRUCTION CONCERNING PERJURY.

*Amen, I say to you. (Matt. xxiv. 34.)*

**T**HE Son of God here, and elsewhere in the gospel, confirms His word by an oath, as it were, for swearing is nothing else than to call upon God, His divine veracity, His justice, or upon His creatures in the name of God, as witness of the truth of our words. — Is swearing, then, lawful, and when? — It is lawful when justice or necessity or an important advantage requires it, and the cause is true and equitable. (*Jer. iv. 2.*) Those sin grievously, therefore, who swear to that which is false and unjust, because they call upon God as witness of falsehood and injustice, by which His eternal truthfulness and justice is desecrated; those sin who swear in a truthful cause without necessity and sufficient reason, because it is disrespectful to call upon God as witness for every trivial thing. In like manner, those sin grievously and constantly who are so accustomed to swearing as to break out into oaths, without knowing or considering whether the thing is true or false, whether they will keep their promise or not, or even if they will be able to keep it; such expose themselves to the danger of swearing falsely. "There is no one," says St. Chrysostom, "who swears often, who does not sometimes swear falsely, just as he who speaks much, sometimes says unbecoming and false things." Therefore Christ tells those who seek perfection, not to swear at all, (*Matt. v. 34.*) that they might not fall into the habit of swearing and from that into perjury. He who has the habit of swearing should, therefore, take the greatest pains to eradicate it; to accomplish which it will be very useful to reflect that if we have to render an account for every idle word we speak, (*Matt. xii. 36.*) how much more strictly will we be judged for unnecessary false oaths! God's curse accompanies him who com-



mits perjury, in all his ways, as proved by daily experience. He who commits perjury in court, robs himself of the merits of Christ's death and will be consumed in the fire of hell, which is represented by the crucifix and burning tapers, in presence of which the oath (in some places) is taken. If you have had the misfortune to be guilty of perjury, at once be truly sorry, weep for this terrible sin which you have committed, frankly confess it, repair the injury you may have caused by it, and chastise yourself for it by rigorous penance.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF THE CONSECRATION OF A CHURCH.



*Why do we celebrate this feast annually?*

O remind us of the day on which a church was consecrated to God, and to give Him due thanks for having deigned to select a place among us for His dwelling, for having shown us so many favors in it, and for preserving us in the true faith.

*Is the consecration of a church and the celebration of its anniversary a modern custom?*

By no means; for we read in the Scriptures that Moses anointed and sanctified the tabernacle, and that Solomon built a beautiful temple to the Lord and solemnized its consecration during fourteen days in a most magnificent manner, that the anniversary of this consecration was observed by the Jews, and attended by Christ himself. (iii *Kings* viii; *John* x. 22.) The first Christians also consecrated their churches, and solemnly commemorated the anniversary. The ancient martyrology, ascribed to St. Jerome, mentions the consecration of the first church in Rome, supposed to have been performed by St. Peter. Owing to the persecutions, the churches of the first Christians were not consecrated with as much solemnity as in our times, because even the divine service had to be performed in secret and during the night, but as soon as these persecutions ceased during the reign of Constantine, who embraced Christianity, the churches were consecrated with the greatest magnificence and the most imposing ceremonies.



*What are these ceremonies?*

1. On the day previous to the consecration, the bishop and the faithful fast, because we can become spiritual temples of God only by mortification and penitential works, and only thus enter the heavenly Jerusalem of which the church is a symbol. 2. The relics of the saints which are to be enclosed in the altar, are preserved outside the church walls, in a tent or other suitable place, to remind us that the saints lived on earth as pilgrims and strangers, until the Lord opened to them the gates of heaven. 3. Twelve crosses are painted upon the church walls, before each of which is placed a candle; these candles are lighted at the commencement of the consecration. The cross is eminently the Christian's badge, the twelve candles represent the twelve apostles whom our Lord Himself calls the Light of the world, and they admonish us to live as children of light, adhering to the precepts of the Apostolic Church. 4. The bishop recites the penitential psalms before the church door, blesses water, with which he sprinkles himself as well as the by-standers goes three times with the clergy and people around the church, sprinkling the outer walls with holy water, and at every round knocks with his crosier at the door, which is not opened until the third time, when he makes the sign of the cross on the threshold, saying: "Behold the sign of the cross; let all evil spirits depart." The penitential psalms are to remind us that the road to the kingdom of God passes only by the way of conversion of life; the blessing of water and the sprinkling with it, that only the pure can enter heaven; the triple knocking, that we must pray with perseverance and contend for heaven, as Christ says; (*Matt. vii. 7.*) and the sign of the cross on the threshold reminds us, that the devil, 'the strong man armed,' as Christ calls him, is not driven from this world without violence and much battling. 5. The bishop with his assistants enters the church, which is still closed to the other clergy and the people, by which we are reminded of Christ's entrance with a number of the saints into heaven, and the establishment of the Church triumphant there. 6. The bishop then intones the hymn "Veni Creator Spiritus," since from the Holy Ghost proceeds every blessing and sanctification; the floor of the church is strewn with ashes in the form of a cross, and the bishop with his crosier writes the Greek and Latin alphabets in them, while the choir sing the "Benedictus," thus representing the union of the Jews and the Gentiles in one faith and one Church, and also that the congregation belongs to that Church which especially cele-



brates its service in the Greek and Latin tongues. 7. The bishop now blesses a certain mixture of water, salt, ashes and wine, which is called the Gregorian Water, because Pope Gregory introduced it, (*Lib. 11. cp. 86.*) and sprinkles the walls and altar with it; the water represents Christ's humanity, the wine His divinity, the ashes are a figure of death, and the salt of incorruption; this mixture symbolizes Christ who, true God and true man, died and by His resurrection lives eternally. Through Him alone are the faithful purified and fitted to be the temples and dwelling-places of God. 8. The bishop signs, with his crosier, a cross upon the upper and lower inside parts of the doors, that all the enemies of peace and blessing should fly from its threshold, and to invoke the plenitude of all graces for those that pass over it. 9. The bishop anoints the five crosses which are engraven in the altar-stone. The altar represents Christ, the crosses His five sacred wounds, from which flow to us blessings and salvation for time and eternity, the anointing is in commemoration of the mysterious anointing of Christ, by which He was made king, prophet and priest of the New Testament, and reminds us of the blessings which flow to us from the altar, on which Christ offers Himself in the holy Sacrifice. 10. After this, the relics are taken from the place in which they have been preserved, and carried in procession around the church, while the people repeat the Litany of the Saints; from which we learn that we must follow the saints under the leadership of Christ, and implore God's mercy and grace if we would enter the Church triumphant in heaven. 11. The relics are then brought into the church, a hymn of joy and praise being chanted at their entrance; this is to remind us of the joy of the saints when Christ shall conduct all His elect into heaven. 12. The relics are finally inserted in the altar, and the stone which encloses them cemented by the bishop with mortar made with the Gregorian water; this enclosing signifies that the saints are perfectly united with Christ, and that whatever we ask through their intercession, we obtain only through Christ and His infinite merits. 13. One of the priests passes around the altar several times, incensing it; the priest represents the angel in the Apocalypse (*viii. 3, 4.*) who stood before the altar with a golden thurible, and placed much incense, that is, the prayers of the saints, upon the golden altar before the throne of God. 14. This done, the bishop anoints the twelve crosses, which signifies the graces granted to those who faithfully observe the apostolic instructions. 15. The bishop then forms five crosses out of blessed incense, which he places on the five crosses carved



in the stone, and over each cross of incense puts one of wax, lighting the upper part of them, so that the incense may be kindled and consumed. These lights are symbolic of the offering of the faithful, and of their hearts, enlightened by faith, and inflamed with the fire of love. 16. This done, some further anointings are made at the altar, the new, fresh altar-cloths, vestments, chalices, &c., are blessed, the altar is covered with the blessed cloths, the cross and candlesticks placed upon it, and the unbloody Sacrifice of the New Law is for the first time offered on the newly consecrated altar by the bishop. (*Himiob. and Liturgy by Marzohl, &c.*)

*Why are churches thus consecrated?*

That, as far as human ability permits, a worthy dwelling may be prepared for the Almighty, where we may adore Him and offer our sacrifices; that we may know how holy is the place upon the consecration of which so much trouble and care are bestowed and in which God dwells; that we may have a place in which we can meet for divine worship, hear the word of God, assist at the holy Sacrifice, and receive the sacraments; that our piety may be increased by the holiness of the place, our reverence excited, and our zeal in the service of the Most High more and more inflamed.

At the Introit, in order to inspire reverence for the temples dedicated to God, the Church uses the words of Jacob: Terrible is this place: it is the house of God, and the gate of heaven: and shall be called the court of God. (*Gen. xxviii. 17.*) How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord. (*Ps. lxxxiii. 1, 2.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who renewest unto us each year the day of the consecration of this holy temple, and dost continue to bring us in safety to Thy holy mysteries: graciously hear the prayers of Thy people, and grant that whosoever enters this temple to ask good things from Thee may rejoice in the obtaining of all his petitions. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Apoc. xxi. 2—5.*) IN THOSE DAYS, I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven, from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice from



the throne, saying: Behold the tabernacle of God with men, and he will dwell with them. And they shall be his people, and God himself with them shall be their God: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away. And he that sat on the throne said: Behold, I make all things new.

EXPLANATION. This lesson contains a description of the heavenly Jerusalem, or the Church triumphant in heaven, represented as a bride adorned for her husband, that we may arrive at some idea of the eternal happiness of the just, and that we may be encouraged to present our soul, adorned with virtue and piety, to her bridegroom Christ Jesus; but the Church on this day applies this figure to the house of God which by the consecration becomes, so to speak, a bride adorned for God, a heavenly Jerusalem, and in which He establishes His dwelling, that He may live always with men, and may enrich them with the treasures of His grace.

What awe and reverence are, therefore, due to the temples of God, since He has taken up His dwelling within them, remaining in them as in His palace to hear and grant the requests of all who pray to Him!

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xix. 1—10.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus entering in, walked through Jericho. And behold, there was a man named Zacheus: who was the chief of the publicans, and he was rich: and he sought to see Jesus who he was: and he could not for the crowd, because he was low of stature. And running before, he climbed up into a sycamore tree that he might see him: for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus was come to the place, looking up, he saw him, and said to him: Zacheus, make haste and come down: for this day I must abide in thy house. And he made haste and came down, and received him with joy. And when all saw it, they murmured, saying that he was gone to be a guest with a man that was a sinner. But Zacheus, standing, said to the Lord: Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor: and if I





have wronged any man of any thing, I restore him fourfold. Jesus said to him: This day is salvation come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost.

**INSTRUCTIONS.** Zacheus was a tax-collector. In the Old Law this class of people were despised, looked upon as public sinners, because they committed many injustices, and were slaves to avarice and usury. Zacheus wished to see our Saviour, but Christ anticipated his desire. He invited Zacheus to receive Him, and when He found how cordially he did so, how ready he was to repair all his in-



justice, and to sin no more, Christ brought salvation to him and his whole house. He forgave him his sins, and received Him among the children of God. How willingly does our Lord visit us also! His happiness is to be with the children of men. (*Prov. viii. 31.*) Why do we not respond to His desire? Why do we not offer Him our hearts as a perpetual dwelling? In holy Communion He comes really, truly and substantially to every one who receives Him. Why do we not receive holy Communion oftener? Let us imitate Zacheus, restore ill-gotten goods, detest all our sins, seriously purpose to become better, excite in us a longing desire for Jesus, and He will come, make us children of God, and give us grace and salvation.

### INSTRUCTION ON THE SPIRITUAL TEMPLE WHICH IS MAN HIMSELF.

*You are the temple of the living God, as God saith:  
I will dwell in them. (ii Cor. vi. 16.)*

**S**T. Bernard justly remarks that the festival of the church's consecration is also our festival; for we also are temples — living temples of God — for which we were no less solemnly consecrated in holy baptism, than are churches of wood and stone. The ceremonies made use of in consecrating churches bear a great resemblance to those used in baptism. Every Christian is:

1. A pure temple; for, just as a church is first purified by repeated prayer, by exorcisms, by sprinkling with holy water, by signing with the sign of the cross, and the incensing, from all diabolical malice and impurities, so also are we purified in baptism from all diabolical malice, from all sin and stain by repeated prayers, by exorcisms, by frequent use of the sign of the cross, by the breathing of the priest upon the one to be baptized; finally, by the triple sprinkling of holy water with the invocation of the most Holy Trinity. From this follows the duty of keeping ourselves in the purity obtained by baptism, and suffering nothing in our hearts which might offend the eyes of so pure a God. Woe to those who desecrate and pollute the temple of God! God Himself, says St. Paul, (*i Cor. iii. 17.*) will destroy them. Now the temple of the heart is desecrated and polluted by every mortal sin, especially by impurity: and when we sin, it is the same as if we drive God from His temple and give it over to the devil, or set up an idol in it. What a disgrace this is to the majesty of God! What must be done if we have indeed been so unfortunate?



We must drive the devil from our hearts by sincere penance, destroy the idol, and cleanse the temple of the heart with the blood of the Lamb by receiving the holy sacraments, and consecrate it anew, as a desecrated temple is again consecrated.

2. A holy temple in which God is adored in spirit and in truth, as He demands, (*John* iv. 23.) and in which He is served in sanctity and justice. (*Luke* i. 74, 75.) The sanctity of God demands this as well as the other ceremonies of baptism, in which the Christian, like a church, is sanctified and anointed with holy oil and chrism. Sanctity, therefore, is something essential to a baptized person, and he is no true Christian who is not holy or at least does not seek holiness. Nor is it so difficult or impossible to obtain this sanctity as some think; for it only consists in the love of God and in the exact performance of the divine will. It is by no means difficult or impossible to love God and accomplish His will, because God who assists the weak, (*ii Cor.* xii. 9.) immediately and always gives His grace to those who really wish it, and if God be for us, who is against us? (*Rom.* viii. 31.)

PRAYER OF ST. AUGUSTINE. O God! who didst make me Thy temple not on account of my own preceding merits, but only by Thy grace in holy baptism, grant, that I may always be a pure and holy temple for Thee. Cleanse my heart from all vices, decorate it with all virtues pleasing to Thee, and do not permit that there should ever be anything in this Thy dwelling that might be displeasing to the eyes of Thy majesty. Finally, grant also that I may one day be used in the building of the heavenly Jerusalem as a living stone, which has been sufficiently carved and formed by the tribulations of this world. Amen.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE MONDAY FOLLOWING THE FEAST OF THE CONSECRATION OF A CHURCH.



IN many parishes throughout Europe the beautiful and consoling practice prevails of having, on the day following the feast of the consecration of the church, special service for the deceased parishioners, and to pray for departed souls.

The thought that the deceased faithful, though they have departed to another world, and no longer walk among us, still belong to the communion of the holy Church, and are united to us by the tie of love which reaches beyond the grave, is at the foundation of this beautiful custom. They, too, shall yet partake of the graces which are implored by prayer in the consecrated house of God, dispensed to the living and the dead by the most holy Sacrifice, since prayers and the holy Sacrifice are offered for the repose of their souls in the church where they once lingered.

On this day we should, therefore, assist at the service for the dead with the intention of praying for all departed parishioners, but particularly for those who are entirely forgotten, for whom prayers are no longer said, and the holy Sacrifice offered.

Whilst the priest says the office of the dead, those present should recite the rosary or other prayers; during the Mass they should unite their prayer with that of the priest, and at the Libera all should pray with their whole heart, that God may grant happiness to the souls of the departed. After the Libera the priest usually says five Paters and Aves and the Creed. At the conclusion the following (or a similar) prayer is said:

PRAYER. O God! who alone canst give means of salvation after death, grant, we beseech Thee, to all those who have departed from our midst the forgiveness of their sins, and the remission of their punishment. Show them Thy mercy, forgive them whatever they have committed against Thy holy law in their dealings with men through human weakness, and



which they did not expiate with tears of penance. Judge not according to the rigor of Thy justice, but according to the multitude of Thy mercies. Remember not the sins of their youth, but show them Thy unspeakable goodness, that it may be for their salvation to have believed and hoped in Thee. Through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost for all eternity. Amen.

V. Lord, grant eternal rest to the souls of the faithful departed,

R. And let perpetual light shine upon them;

V. May they rest in peace.

R. Amen.

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GOFFINE'S  
ECCLESIASTICAL YEAR.

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PART II.

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INSTRUCTION ON THE VENERATION AND  
INVOCATION OF SAINTS

WITH  
EXPLANATIONS OF THE EPISTLES AND GOSPELS  
PROPER TO THEIR FEASTS,  
AND OF  
DOCTRINAL POINTS SUGGESTED BY THEM,  
&c. &c.





After this I saw a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues: standing before the throne, and in the sight of the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. And they cried with a loud voice, saying: Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb.  
(Apoc. vii 9, 10.)



## PRELIMINARY INSTRUCTIONS ON THE VENERATION AND INVOCATION OF SAINTS.

*What is the doctrine of the Catholic Church concerning the  
veneration and invocation of saints?*



FROM the earliest ages of the Christian religion it has been the accepted and praiseworthy custom to commemorate the saints in heaven on festival days dedicated to them, and to honor their pictures and relics; that the saints who reign with Christ, (*Apoc. xx. 4. 6.*) may intercede for man. It is therefore useful and good, that we humbly invoke them and have recourse to their assistance and intercession. (*Conc. Trid. Sess. 25.*)

*Why are the saints to be venerated?*

Because they are friends of Christ, and reign with Him in eternal happiness, (*ii Tim. ii. 12.*) having faithfully followed Him on earth, and with St. Paul fought the good fight; (*ii Tim. iv. 7.*) because they are living members of the Church, through the bond of charity (*Col. iii. 14.*) are united with us as friends and brothers, heartily love us, and take great interest in our welfare, (*Luke xv. 7.*) and therefore pray to God for us. (*ii Mach. xv. 14.*)

*But does not the veneration of saints diminish the honor due to God?*

Not in the least, since all the honor shown to the saints is referred to God alone, whose friends and servants they are, and who has wonderfully revealed Himself in them. (*Psa. lxxvii. 36.*) This veneration, therefore, cannot diminish the honor due to God, but is rather a confirmation of it.

*How should the saints be honored?*

As servants and friends of God, joint-heirs with Christ, and glorified members of His body, who dearly love us



and aid us by their intercession, but not as God, nor as if they could aid us by their own power; we are, therefore, not permitted to adore them, or show them divine honors.

*What difference is there between veneration and worship?*

Worship is the greatest of all honor, due only to God, by which we acknowledge Him as the supreme Being, and as creatures submit to Him with deepest reverence. Besides this, the word worship, in Scripture as well as in ancient profane writings, signifies an external reverence, a low bow, &c. (*Gen.* xxiii. 7., xxvii. 29., xxxvii. 7.; *ii Kings* xviii. 21.; *iii Kings* i. 16.) Thus, when we read that David bowing himself down to the ground, (before Saul) worshipped, we must understand by all means that it was not the worship due to God alone, but merely a rendering of external honor. In this sense the Church uses the word **worship** in regard to the cross of Christ. Veneration is nothing more than an outward sign of the esteem which we have for the dignity and merits of others. If we bow before the pictures of Christ and the saints, before their relics, or bend the knee to them, these external honors refer to those who are represented by the pictures, or whose relics are present. Princes and their portraits are venerated in the same manner in our days, without being worshipped.

*How do we best show our veneration for the saints?*

By rejoicing and wishing them happiness because of the great honor and glory they have acquired by a faithful coöperation with God's grace, by continual practice of virtue, and performance of good works, thanking and praising God for the graces bestowed on them. When we do not seek to imitate them, "then," says St. Augustine, "the saints are not gladdened by our veneration, but are pleased only when we imitate their virtuous examples. To venerate without imitating them, is simply to flatter them falsely." We also venerate them by devoutly and reverently observing their festivals, but we must not understand that merely resting from work means keeping the festivals devoutly and reverently. If questioned concerning the observance of their festivals by many Christians the saints would perhaps answer as God did the Jews: "My soul hateth your new moons, and your solemnities: they are become troublesome to me, I am weary of bearing them; (*Isai.* i. 14.) for with all your seeming devotion, your hands are empty of good works, and filled with iniquity; dissolve the bonds of sin and learn to do good — then your devotion will be pleas-



ing to us." Finally, we venerate them when with proper confidence we turn to them in our cares and seek their intercession.

*Are we to invoke the saints?*

Assuredly, for the intercession of saints is taught by the holy Scripture. When thou didst pray with tears, and didst bury the dead, I offered thy prayers to the Lord, said the Angel Raphael to Tobias; (*Tob. xii. 12.*) St. Paul asked the intercession of his living brethren, (ii *Thess. iii. 1.*) and God Himself advised it to the friends of the pious Job. If the doctrine of the holy Scripture permits us to ask intercession of the living why should not we be allowed to ask the intercession of the saints who stand before the throne of God, and gaze upon His countenance? The Church has always taught that it is useful and good to invoke the intercession of the saints, and has at all times practiced it. Unbelievers who abuse this holy practice, seek the intercession of the living without regarding it as a circuitous path to God; why should not as much be granted to the saints, who are the glorified members of the body of Christ?

*But since the saints are not omniscient, can they hear our prayers?*

They need not be omniscient to know for what we pray. Cannot God make known to them our cares? The angels know the conversion of a sinner and rejoice over it, (*Luke xv. 10.*) they hear the prayers and know the good works of the pious, (*Tob. xii. 12.*) they bring them as an agreeable gift in the sight of God. (*Apoc. viii. 3.*) Cannot the same be said of the saints, since they are like the angels and possess the same glory? (*Matt. xxii. 30.*) Did not Onias and Jeremias receive, after their death, knowledge of the afflictions of the Jewish people, and pray to God for them? (ii *Mach. xv. 12.*) We need not be anxious with regard to the manner in which the saints become cognizant of our prayers, since God has a thousand ways by which to make our needs known to them.

*On what do we base our faith that the saints pray for us?*

On the doctrine of the communion of saints, according to which the most intimate spiritual communion exists between all the members of the Church, as members of the body of Christ, so that in the spiritual possessions of the one the others have part, and it is the anxious desire of



each that others should share in that which he possesses, for which reason they pray for each other constantly; (*James* v. 16.; *Apoc.* v. 8.) it is also based on the great charity of the saints which was theirs while here, and by which they were enabled to sacrifice everything, often even their lives, for the welfare of their fellow creatures. This love does not cease after death, for love never dies, (i *Cor.* xiii. 8.) and they have carried it with them to heaven, where they now love us more than ever, and certainly show their love by praying for us; for they know from their own experience to what dangers our welfare is exposed, and how much we are in need of God's assistance.

*In what sense do we seek the intercession of the saints?*

Not in the sense as if we could not, and dare not, turn directly to God, but because we consider ourselves as sinners, unworthy to appear in the sight of God whom we have offended by sin, and so hope to obtain mercy and compassion through the prayers of the saints, which avail much with God. (*John* ix. 31.; *James* v. 16.) We, therefore, think it useful and good to seek help from the prayers of the saints, so that we may receive grace from God through His Son, our Lord, who alone is our Redeemer and Saviour. (*Conc. Trid. Sess.* 25.) Thus the invocation of the saints is not opposed to the invocation of God, for we invoke Him as the Giver of grace and the Author of all good, (*James* i. 17.) and this invocation of Him is an act of adoration; but when we invoke the saints, we invoke them as mediators who will request with us and for us from God through Jesus Christ that which we require. For this reason all the prayers of the Church end with the words: Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

*But does not the intercession of saints diminish the mediatorship of Christ, as the heretics maintain?*

Not in the least. According to the faith of the Catholic Church, Christ, through His work of redemption, is the only mediator between God and man, asking for the sake of His own merits, mercy and compassion for us from God. But the saints are our intercessors and mediators in this sense, that they may pray for us that God be merciful to us, because of the merits of Christ, and their intercession is only heard on account of Christ.

*Is not Christ's intercession superabundant?*

It is superabundant, and yet St. Paul asks the intercession of the faithful: Watching with all instance and



supplication for all the saints: and for me. (*Ephes.* vi. 18. 19.; *Heb.* xiii. 18, 19.) Are we wiser than this holy apostle?

*Can the saints through their own power give us that for which we pray?*

The Roman Catechism says: "We do not invoke the saints in the same manner that we do God; we pray to God, that He Himself may give us the good, but we pray to the saints that they, since they are pleasing to God, may be our intercessors, and obtain from Him that which we need." For this reason we say in the litanies of God: Have mercy on us, hear us! and in the litanies of the saints: Pray for us!

*What qualities must the veneration have to correspond with the sense of the Church and be agreeable to God and the saints?*

It must, above all, be directed to the honor of God and for the salvation of our souls, as St. Jerome says: "We honor the servants so that their honor may redound to the honor of God." It could not possibly please the saints if the honor of God would suffer in the least by the veneration given them; for they regard His honor far more than their own. Consequently, the first and most important quality of the veneration of the saints is, that we are encouraged thereby to adore and glorify God, through whose grace the saints attained so high a degree of sanctity and happiness. This devotion must also make us virtuous and saintly; that is, if we seek to venerate the saints, we must emulate their example; we must conform ourselves to the will of God, in that which we desire from the saints, be they spiritual or corporal favors, and not ask anything unjust, unreasonable, or injurious to our salvation; and, lastly, we must seek to make ourselves worthy of this grace by a pious life.

*What distinction does the Catholic Church make in the veneration of different saints?*

The feasts of some saints are celebrated with much more solemnity than others. The reason of this is, that according to the faith of the Catholic Church there are certain degrees among the saints in accordance with their dignity and sanctity. Christ did not say without meaning: In my Father's house there are many mansions, (*John* xiv. 2.) nor did St. Paul: One is the glory of the sun, another the glory of the moon, and another the glory of the stars. For star differeth from star in glory. So also



is the resurrection of the dead. (i. *Cor.* xv. 41, 42.) In this manner the Church permits certain saints to be especially venerated and invoked as patrons or protectors of different countries and churches, as patron-saints over each and every station of life, so that in dangers of body and soul we may acquire aid and comfort through their intercession, and that we may fervently imitate their virtues.

*Why is more honor shown to Mary, the beloved Mother of the Son of God, than to other saints?*

Because she is the Mother of the Son of God our Redeemer, and is therefore the Queen of Saints. Why should she not be honored and praised who is full of grace above all the saints. Is not the Lord with her, and is she not blessed among women! has she not said of herself in the spirit of a prophet: From henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. Concerning her a woman among the people cried out: Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the paps that gave thee suck! (*Luke* xi. 27.) For similar reasons St. Joseph deserves after Mary a special veneration, because he, on account of his sanctity, was chosen, from among all men, to be the foster-father of Christ.

*What are the different classes of the inhabitants of heaven?*

The angels, who are sent, notwithstanding their greatness, to serve those who wish to be saved. (*Heb.* i. 14.) They guard our souls and bodies, and are therefore called guardian angels; the patriarchs, who according to nature were the forefathers of Christ, and because of their virtues are types of Him; the prophets, who as instruments of the Holy Ghost, taught the people the will of God, strengthened them in the true religion, and prepared them for the coming of the Saviour of the world, whom they foretold; the apostles, who as witnesses of the divinity of Jesus Christ, as messengers of peace, (hence their name apostle, that is, messenger) are regarded as the fathers and pastors of all the faithful, as the pillars and corner-stones of the Church; the evangelists, who have written down the doctrines of Jesus which they heard, and the history of His deeds which they saw; the martyrs, who sacrificed their lives for virtue and the Christian religion, and fertilized God's Church with the blood of martyrs, so that it brought forth an immense number of Christians; the bishops and priests, who as good shepherds fed their flocks with the blessed sacraments, with the doctrines of the gospel, and guarded them from wolves, and by offering the holy Sacrifice of the Mass placed themselves somewhat as mediators be-



tween God and man; the monks and hermits, who laid aside all earthly honors, joys and wealth, retired into solitude or into monasteries and, so to speak, buried themselves there; the confessors, who through all the mockery and persecution of the world would not permit themselves to be led from the profession of and adherence to the evangelical laws; the virgins, that is, those who preferred virginal purity to all the pleasures, riches and honors of the world, and never stained it, so that they now follow the Lamb in heaven singing a new canticle which none other can sing; the widows, who have sanctified their difficult position in life by humility, patience, industry, proper training of their children, and by resignation to the will of God; the penitents, who having been wrecked in faith, or having lost their innocence, have grasped the plank of penance, rendered satisfaction for their sins, and passed on through the narrow way to heaven.

*How should we venerate the patrons of persons, countries, and churches?*

If the Church designates certain patrons for the faithful, she wishes that they should be our models and examples as well as our protectors and intercessors. We must, therefore, solicit not only the intercession and protection of our patron-saints, but try especially to make ourselves worthy of them by emulating their virtues.

*Is it allowed to venerate the relics of the saints, that is, their bones or other parts of them?*

Undoubtedly; for it was the pious custom even in the very earliest times of the Church, and God Himself has, at all times, confirmed this veneration by great miracles. Moses, filled with reverence, took the bones of the Patriarch Joseph and carried them with him on his journey to the Promised Land, wherethey were finally preserved. (*Exodus* xiii. 19; *Ecclus.* xlix. 18.) Eliseus divided the waters of the Jordan with the mantle of Elias, (*iv Kings* ii. 14.) by touching Eliseus' bones a man came to life. (*iv Kings* xiii. 21.) Jesus did not rebuke the woman troubled with the issue of blood, who in faith touched the hem of His garment and was healed; (*Matt.* ix. 20) all kinds of diseases were cured by St. Peter's shadow and by St. Paul's handkerchief. (*Acts* v. 15; xix. 12.) The veneration of the relics of Saints, thus approved by the Holy Scriptures, is also sanctioned by the continual practice of the Church. Even the first Christians visited regularly the graves of the martyrs, there to pray and make offerings. The bones of St. Ignatius, Bishop of



Antioch and pupil of St. John, were gathered up with the greatest care by the faithful, and as the most precious of treasures were carried in a triumphal procession on the shoulders of the Christians of the towns on the road to Antioch. This took place in the year 107 after Christ. In like manner the faithful of Smyrna preserved the bones of St. Polycarp, bishop, who was martyred by fire in the year 166. They preserved them, as something more valuable than gold or precious stones, in a sacred place, where every year his martyrdom was commemorated. In a sermon on the Saints Juventius and Maximus, St. Chrysostom says: "Let us visit them often, let us touch the little case, (in which these bones are kept) and approach their relics with the greatest confidence, so that we may receive blessings through them." An immense number of testimonies could still be quoted concerning the veneration of saints' relics, and of the miracles that have occurred through them, by which is clearly shown that this pious custom has always been practiced in the Church.

*Why should we honor the relics of the saints?*

The answer to this is finely given by the Council of Trent: "Because they are the precious remains of bodies that were, in life, members of Christ and temples of the Holy Ghost, and will one day rise and be glorified; God gives us a great many favors through them, and they, therefore, deserve to be held in honor by us." (*Sess. 25. de invoc. et venerat. Reliqu. Sanct.*)

*Are we permitted to venerate in the same manner the pictures of the saints, the holy Cross, &c.?*

Yes, for the honor we show to the picture is given to the one whom it represents. Everybody would consider it an insult to a king if his picture be abused and dishonored. The Council of Trent declares distinctly: "that we must have the pictures of Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and the saints, especially in the temples, retain them there and show them due honor, not as if we believed there is divinity or power in them to which we must pay honor, not as if we demanded aught from them, or as if we put our trust in the pictures, as in olden times did the heathens who put their trust in idols: but we venerate pictures because the honor shown them refers to the original which they represent, so that through the picture which we kiss and before which we uncover our head and prostrate ourselves, we adore Christ and venerate the saints." (*Sess. 25.*)



*But is not the veneration of pictures forbidden by the prohibition to make a graven image?*

No; for God only forbade the adoration of graven images, not their veneration. When God forbade the Jews to make graven images, He wished to prevent them from falling into the superstitions of the neighboring heathens, who really worshipped the images of the sun, stars, men, and animals; but where there was no danger of idolatry, God did not forbid the making of images. Moses himself by God's command placed the image of two Cherubs on the ark of the covenant, (*Exod.* xxv. 18.) facing each other; he also erected a brazen serpent by the same command which for many centuries was reverently preserved, (*Num.* xxi. 8.) until the time of Ezechias who destroyed it because abuses had crept in. (*iv Kings* xviii. 4.) The walls and doors of Solomon's temple were decorated with many figures and carvings, and God Himself solemnly consecrated this temple. (*iii Kings* vi. 29.) Consequently, God did not forbid absolutely the use of images or pictures, and we find them in the earliest times of the Church. Tertullian, (about the year 160 A. D.) makes mention of the picture of the Good Shepherd on the chalice. (*De pudicit.* c. 10.) The pictures of the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of God, of the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul from the second century are still in good state of preservation in the great cemetery of the first Christians at Rome.

*But what is the use of pictures?*

St. Gregory says: "They are for the unlearned a book in which they can study the mysteries and graces of God; that they may take to heart the things which Christ has done for us, and the Saints have done for heaven, and may thus be incited to gratitude, to love of God, and to the imitation of the saints. It is most important that all improper and scandalous pictures, by which innocence is often led astray be removed from every Christian dwelling, and sacred and edifying ones put in their place."

*What is to be said of the so-called miraculous pictures and pilgrim shrines of the Mother of God, and other saints?*

Miraculous pictures and places of pilgrimages of the Mother of God or the saints are those through which God has deigned in a wonderful manner to assist (on account of the intercession of the saints) the faithful who in their different needs and troubles have visited these places and venerated these pictures. It is to be understood that the Church permits the faithful to venerate as miraculous, only



those pictures the truth of whose miracles has been proved beyond all doubt by strict examination. The Catholic Church does not believe these pictures to have any power of themselves which produces these miracles, but that God, of His own pleasure, works His miracles through them; the Church teaches that we should not pray to these pictures for anything, or put our trust in them. We invoke Christ Himself or the saints; Christ as God, the saints as friends of God; not their pictures, for in God alone we place all our hope.

*Are we allowed to build Churches, to say Mass, to bring offerings, to make vows, &c. to the pictures and relics of saints?*

No; acts of this kind are acts of veneration which belongs exclusively to God who is Lord over life and death. If such things are performed, it can only be on account of God and His honor, as a thanksgiving for the graces which He has shown to the saints, by which we can keep in view the remembrance and the honor of the saints in whom God has so marvellously manifested Himself, and whom He has so highly honored and does honor. Thus St. Augustine says: "To no martyr, but to God Himself, the Lord of all martyrs, do we build altars and temples, though built on the graves of martyrs. Not one of our ministers has ever said at the altar: We offer unto thee, O Peter, or Paul! Whatever is offered, is offered to God who crowns the martyrs." (*Lib. xx. cont. Faust. c. 21.*) Thus on certain festivals of saints the Church sings in the Introit: Let us rejoice in the Lord, and celebrate this festival in honor of N. N., over whom the angels rejoice and praise and honor the Son of God. Glory be to the Father, &c.

*Can we, in devotion to the saints, show too much honor to their pictures and relics, and be led astray ourselves?*

Undoubtedly; this occurs if we honor them more than God; if, so to speak, we put God aside and address our prayers and devotions to the saints only, placing in them a presumptuous confidence, as if they could and must of themselves assist us; if we promise ourselves from the saints a happy death and heaven, on account of certain prayers and pious exercises, without taking care to lead a pious life; if we ask nothing but temporal goods, money, and riches, &c. from them, and perhaps use to obtain our requests some suspicious and superstitious prayers and devotions, not introduced by the Church, but by the devil and impious men,\* even calling

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\* Be careful not to buy or to take printed notes, short prayers or tracts from strangers of whom you know nothing or from those who have not the



upon the saints to aid in some vicious deed; and when we represent the saints improperly, or in scandalous pictures; if we expose for veneration relics that are doubtful and have not been declared authentic by the bishops, or when we traffic with them.

*Do the unbelievers do right, when they abuse and condemn the veneration of the saints, of their pictures, &c.?*

If they knew the doctrine of the Church, or would investigate it for themselves, they would not do this, but they usually abuse that which they do not know and do not wish to know. The Catholic Church does not command any of her faithful to venerate the saints, their pictures or relics, but she teaches that this veneration is good and profitable. The Catholic does not honor the saints as he does God; he does not believe and is not allowed to believe that there is any power or divinity in the pictures or relics; he does not ask anything from them, but only from Christ and the saints, whom these pictures represent, he puts no confidence in pictures, as do the heathens, but in God only, by whom the saints, on account of the merits of Christ, will be heard in our behalf.

*Is it not false to say the pope makes men saints?*

It is; for it is an insulting calumny, invented to slander the Catholic Church. God only makes men saints; a Catholic can become a saint only through His grace and through faithful co-operation with the same. The pope, as head of the Church, simply declares that this or that Catholic whom God Himself has pronounced righteous by the miracles He has wrought through him, can be invoked and venerated as a saint. But before the pope publishes any such declaration, a long and strict examination is made of the life of the one who is proposed for canonization.

*What is the manner of proceeding in the canonization of a saint?*

When a person has died having the reputation of sanctity, and the report is circulated that God works miracles through him, the bishop of the diocese prepares a statement from the oaths of trustworthy witnesses, which confirms the fame of the person's sanctity and the authenticity of

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true faith; these usually contain false doctrines. Therefore you should carry all such papers and tracts to your pastor, asking his advice whether you should use them or not.



the miracles. This statement is sent to the Congregation of Rites at Rome. †

The congregation carefully examines it; if it is found to be correct, it is communicated to the pope, who then appoints one of the cardinals of the Congregation commissioner, to procure all the necessary witnesses and explanations for the examination which is now to be instituted into the life of the proposed saint; at the same time some are appointed to oppose the canonization. When this is done, a real jury is composed, that is, cardinals are chosen who solemnly swear that they will carefully try and judge the person's life; and all witnesses for and against that person. Advocates are summoned to this trial of whom one or more undertake, under oath, the saint's defence, others the accusation; they must bring up every circumstance, even the most trivial, which could cast an unfavorable light on the life of the saint, so that the truth may be more clearly shown. Physicians, surgeons, and naturalists are called, who must examine the alleged miracles to discover if they are really miracles or only natural occurrences. As soon as this court is impanelled and the trial commenced, the saint receives the title of "Venerable" which is equivalent to saying he is worthy of beatification. As a general occurrence, the beatification takes place fifty years after death. During all this time the trial continues; all his works, conduct and actions are investigated, and the least thing found therein that is contrary to good morals, causes the canonization to fall to the ground. When the examination of the miracles has been completed, the trial is discontinued for ten years, in order to bring more witnesses in regard to his character. After ten years the virtues of the saint, his faith, hope, charity, his observance of the four cardinal virtues: fortitude, prudence, temperance and justice which he must have exercised in the highest degree, are subjected to a strict and searching investigation. For this purpose the pope appoints by a special bull, which is called Letter of Grace, commissioners who must inquire in the places where the person lived, how he practiced these virtues. After the examination is concluded, the sacred Congregation studies the commissioners' reports, the testimony of the witnesses, &c. and then the trial with all the documents concerning it has to be submitted to the conscientious inspection and examination of the Consistory,

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† The Congregation of Rites is a body of learned cardinals who keep watch and decide on matters concerning the observance of ceremonies and rites in the performance of divine service.



which is composed of all the cardinals, archbishops and bishops of the Roman court. A number of meetings are held, at many of which the pope is present, partly to make personal examination, partly to receive counsel from the bishops. After the pope has done this, always imploring God to enlighten him and also ordering public prayers for the necessary light from heaven, he publishes the bull by which he permits the ceremonies of beatification to take place. As the day approaches, on which the solemn beatification is to be made, St. Peter's church at Rome, the largest and most beautiful in the world, is decorated with all possible splendor; thousands of candles glimmer on all sides of the church, the walls and pillars are draped from top to bottom with the costliest crimson velvet, the high-altar is brilliant with gold and precious stones, and over the altar hangs the veiled picture of the saint whose beatification is about to be commenced. The pope, surrounded by the cardinals and bishops, appears, attended by all his court, kneels down and once more prays for light. Then the cardinal who is to celebrate High-Mass, comes forward in a golden cope and wearing a mitre, reads in a loud voice the pope's brief, in which it is declared that the venerable servant of God whose trial is now at an end, can be venerated and invoked in certain countries and by certain religious orders as one of the saints of God. The *Te Deum* is then intoned, the veil falls from the picture, and amid the roar of cannon, the pope and the people fall upon their knees, venerating the saint and praising God who has so glorified Himself in His servant.

This is the solemn act of beatification; the canonization is not yet finished, that is, the declaration that the saint can be venerated by the whole Catholic world. Before this is done, it must be shown that since the beatification God has worked new miracles through the saint; so there is a new trial and a new examination, and after the performance of new miracles has been clearly proved, the canonization occurs with the same solemnities that were held at the beatification.

From all this it is seen that no trial could be held with more conscientiousness, more care and severity than the process of beatification and canonization, and the final judgment is only given when God Himself by the miracles He works through the saint, decides the question, so that not the pope, therefore, but God only makes saints; He simply glorifies His servants who during their lives sought only His honor and pleasure.





## SHORT INSTRUCTION ON PILGRIMAGES.



### *What is a pilgrimage?*

PILGRIMAGE is a journey voluntarily undertaken to some holy, distant place, where relics or pictures of saints, or of the Blessed Virgin are kept, there to pray fervently through the intercession of the saints to receive help from God in some spiritual or corporal need.

### *Are pilgrimages of recent origin?*

Pilgrimages were customary in the Old Law, and we find them practiced by all nations. Abraham made a three day's journey in order to perform his sacrifice according to the command of God, (*Gen. xxii. 3.*) and the Jews at certain times made pilgrimages to Bethel, which place Jacob had sanctified; (*Gen. xxviii. 18.; i Kings. x. 3.*) in like manner they made, in accordance with a command of Moses, a pilgrimage, three times a year, to the ark of the Covenant, and afterwards to the temple at Jerusalem. (*Deut. xvi. 16.*) What were these but religious pilgrimages? In the New Testament we read that the parents of Jesus with their Divine Child, with many other persons, made yearly pilgrimages to Jerusalem, (*Luke ii. 41, 42.*) that the apostles and pious women visited the sepulchre of Christ, (*Matt. xxviii.; Luke xxiv.*) and that St. Paul, though already a Christian, hastened to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of Pentecost there. (*Acts xx. 16.*) In the history of the Church we find that it was the custom in the earliest ages, as it has continued to be to this day, to make pilgrimages to holy places, as to the holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem and to the graves of martyrs.

### *How should a pilgrimage be made?*

In the spirit of true devotion and penance, with the sincere and holy intention of paying homage to God through His saints. Therefore we should not visit holy places for pleasure and recreation. On the way, and when at the place, we should avoid all idle talk and sensual excesses; we should gladly endure all the hardships of the journey, the unfavorable weather, the temporary inconvenience of the lodgings, be moderate in eating and drinking, pray fervently and with recollection, confess all our sins contritely



and sincerely, reverently receive the Blessed Sacrament, fervently thank God for all the graces which He has shown to us, make good resolutions, and preserve the good impressions which we have received from the pilgrimage, and manifest them afterwards by a pious life. Whoever makes it thus, is sure to derive real advantage therefrom.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. ANDREW.

[November 30.]



ANDREW, the brother of Simon Peter, a fisherman, born in Bethsaida by the sea Genesareth and living at Capharnaum, was at first a disciple of John the Baptist, who seeing the Lord pass by pointed Him out saying: "Behold the Lamb of God!" Andrew hearing these words went at once to Christ, bringing with him Peter, his brother, and having been filled with the Holy Ghost on Pentecost, he traveled through Syria, Epirus and Greece, everywhere announcing the glad tidings of salvation, and at last suffered a martyr's death at Patras, in Achia, where he had established his episcopal seat. While he was preaching Christ at Patras, he was urged by the governor Aegeas, with violent threats, to offer sacrifice to idols; but he bravely replied: "I daily offer sacrifice to the Almighty God, not the flesh of oxen, nor the blood of rams, but an unspotted Lamb; and although all the faithful may have partaken of his flesh, yet the Lamb remains as before he was offered, alive and undivided." The unchangeable hero of the faith was then thrown into prison by command of the enraged governor, who, since he could not force him to deny Christ, condemned him to be cruelly scourged and then crucified. When he was brought out to be crucified, and saw his cross, he cried out: "Hail, precious cross, consecrated by the body of Christ! adorned as with precious jewels by the limbs of Christ! Well do the faithful know what joy lies in thee, and to what glorious reward thou dost lead! O good cross, I have ardently loved thee, long desired and sought thee, and now thou art found by me! thou art made ready for my yearning soul, receive me into thy arms, take me away from men, carry me to thy divine Master, that He who on thee redeemed me, on thee may receive me." Having arrived at the cross, the enraptured apostle disrobed himself, permitted himself to be bound to the cross,



where he remained hanging two days, continually preaching faith in Christ, until his soul was raised to Him, whom he so ardently desired to resemble even in death. If thou wouldst have part in St. Andrew's glory, thou must follow him in his love of the cross.

According to the general opinion, this holy apostle's instrument of torture consisted of the form of a Roman X.

In the Introit of this day's Mass, the Church says of the apostles: To me Thy friends, O God, are made exceedingly honorable: their principality is exceedingly strengthened. Lord, thou hast proved me and known me: thou hast known my sitting down, and my rising up. (*Ps. cxxxviii.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. We humbly beseech Thy majesty, O Lord: that as the blessed Andrew was raised up to be a preacher and ruler of Thy Church: so he may be our constant intercessor with Thee. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, &c.

EPISTLE. (*Rom. x. 10—18.*) BRETHREN, With the heart we believe unto justice, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith: Whosoever believeth in him shall not be confounded. For there is no distinction of the Jew and the Greek: for the same is Lord over all, rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How, then, shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they be sent? as it is written: How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, of them that bring glad tidings of good things! But all do not obey the gospel. For Isaias saith: Lord, who hath believed our report? Faith then cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. But I say: Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the whole world.



**EXPLANATION.** The apostle here tells us that it is not sufficient for salvation that we believe with the heart, but we must also openly confess Christ, that is, in words and in deeds, and then only we have the true and living faith in Jesus, when we are never ashamed to profess it. He teaches besides that God makes no difference between Jew and Greek, that is, the Gentiles, but that every one can be saved who believes in Christ, and openly confesses his faith in words and works. But all can believe, since faith comes from hearing, and the word of God through its preachers is everywhere announced. For this reason the Jews and infidels are not excusable for their unbelief, for the Church sends forth, at all times, into all countries, her apostles and preachers of whom it is written: How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, of them that bring glad tidings of good things. In our days, how much is preached and how little faith is seen! Can such Christians excuse their ignorance, if one day the Lord shall demand an account of their faith?

**GOSPEL.** (*Matt.* iv. 18—22.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea (for they were fishers), and he saith to them: Come ye after me, and I will make you to be fishers of men. And they immediately leaving their nets followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. And they forthwith left their nets and father, and followed him.

**EXPLANATION.** Christ chose His apostles to show us that those only who are called can assume the place of teacher and as He Himself says, must be chosen and sent. (*John* xv. 16.) He called His apostles at the very commencement of His teaching, that by continual intercourse with Him, by daily hearing His doctrines, by seeing the divine life he led, they might prepare themselves for their great calling.

Christ chose simple fishermen as His apostles that the world might know that the introduction of Christianity was the work of God, and that no one could say, Christ



## 620 INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER.

won the world to the faith by deceit, force, riches, or science.

I will make you fishers of men, that is, I will give you grace to convert souls and bring them to God. People in the world can and should, in their own way, be fishers of men. Such are they when they incite their associates, or those under them, to listen attentively to the word of God, or give them pious books to read, keep them from bad company, and gently reprove their faults, &c. St. Augustine says that in this way fathers of families exercise the office of bishops.

They immediately followed Christ. We learn from this that we should obey at once the word of God, when it urges us to do good, or to be converted, and that knowing the truth of the divine call, we should put aside all human gains and considerations in order to follow this voice, like the apostles who laid by all temporal profits and followed Jesus when He called them; for He says: He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me. (*Matt. x. 37.*)

PRAYER. Most benign Jesus! who hast elevated simple fishermen to the exalted dignity of apostles, thus putting the wisdom and power of this world to shame, grant, we beseech Thee, that their successors may observe Thy teachings, and in faith, hope and charity remain ever Thine.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER.

[*December 3.*]



FRANCIS XAVIER, called the Apostle of the Indies, was born at the castle Xavier, near Pampeluna in Spain, April 7, 1506. He was brought up by his parents in the fear of the Lord, and showed, even as a child, rare talent and love for science. In his eighteenth year his parents sent him to the university at Paris, where he soon became one of its most renowned teachers. Here he was in danger of becoming proud, but God directed it that he made the acquaintance



of St. Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, who by repeating often the words of Christ: What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul, taught him indifference to worldly honors, and finally, moved him to join the Jesuits. Henceforth he lived for God only; to promote the honor of God and aid in the salvation of immortal souls was his only desire. God gave him an opportunity of fulfilling this desire by sending him, in the year 1541 as a missionary to India. Sustained by the purest love of God and of his neighbor, he journeyed on foot through the two large countries of India and Japan, enduring unspeakable hardships, everywhere preaching Christ, the Crucified, converting many hundred thousands to the Christian religion, baptizing them with his own hands, working the most marvellous miracles, even raising some from death to life. He wished to pass over to the immense country of China there to preach the gospel to the heathens, but on the island of Sancian in sight of that land, he was taken ill; and in the utmost poverty, almost entirely abandoned by his countrymen, he died, December 2, 1552, pronouncing the words: In thee, O Lord, have I hoped, let me never be confounded, deliver me in thy justice. (*Ps. xxx. 2.*)

St. Francis is also the patron of the society for the propagation of the faith, which works so beneficially in our days.

The Introit of the Mass reads: I spoke of thy testimonies before kings, and I was not ashamed: I meditated also on thy commandments, which I loved exceedingly. (*Ps. cxviii.*) Praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people: because his mercy is confirmed upon us, and the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever. (*Ps. cxvi.*) Glory &c.

*(The Epistle as on the Feast of St. Andrew.)*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who wast pleased, by the preaching and miracles of blessed Francis, to add the nations of the Indies to Thy Church: mercifully grant, that, as we venerate his glorious merits, so we may also follow the example of his virtues. Thro'.

*[The Gospel as on Ascension Day, verses 15—18.]*



## INSTRUCTION ON THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH.

*Go ye into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature.*  
(Mark xvi. 15.)

**A**LL nations, if they would be saved, must believe in the Catholic doctrine. Christ Himself says this: He that believeth not, shall be condemned, (*Mark* xvi. 16.) and the apostle writes: Without faith it is impossible to please God. (*Heb.* xi. 6.) But if all nations must believe in Christ, then this faith must be announced to them, for the apostle says: How shall they believe him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? (*Rom.* x. 14.) Christ, therefore, commanded His apostles to go into the whole world and to preach the gospel everywhere. This command they obeyed with untiring zeal and heroic love. They carried the doctrine of the cross to the remotest lands, ceasing not, even when in bonds and chains and under the most cruel tortures, to preach the faith of the Son of God. The apostles died, but zeal to bring the heathens to the knowledge of Christ did not die with them. At all times there have been in the Catholic Church men full of zeal for the salvation of souls, who have made it the work of their lives to spread the Christian religion among infidels as well as among unbelievers. Who does not remember St. Patrick, the apostle of the Irish, St. Augustine, the apostle of the Saxons, St. Boniface, the apostle of the Germans, SS. Rupert, Kilian, Severin, Willibald, Francis Xavier, and hundreds of others? These men were called Messengers of Faith, Missionaries; and even now such missionaries go every year into distant and unknown lands, to light the torch of the true faith for all who sit in the darkness of infidelity and the shadow of death. Who can tell the life and work of a missionary? He leaves his parents and native land, and placing his trust in God's help alone, he traverses the wide ocean, goes into unknown countries, over the highest mountains, across rivers, inhospitable steppes, through dark forests, that like the Good Shepherd he may find the lost sheep and lead them into the fold of Christ, to the true Church; in utter poverty, in hunger and thirst, benumbed with cold, exhausted by heat, exposed to the jaws of wild beasts, still he journeys from one spot to another, for the sake of the heathens often more dangerous than the wild animals, to announce the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. Armed with the image of the Cru-



cified, he approaches the ferocious savages without trembling, and fearlessly regards the spears, tomahawks and poisoned arrows, with which they threaten his life. For the love of Jesus and immortal souls he courageously dies the cruel death of the martyr. Whose heart does not beat joyfully and consolingly when he hears that this apostle of the Lord has changed fierce cannibals into pious sheep, and where robbery, murder and lewdness disgraced human nature, where temples and altars were raised to the devil, there is now seen the spirit of the earliest Christians: justice and love, innocence, humility and Christian simplicity, these heavenly virtues are there now blooming, while the sinless Lamb Jesus is offered in the chapels, is adored and loved with ardent devotion! But the words of our Lord are even now verified: The harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few. (*Matt. ix. 37.*) Millions are yet living in all the abominable horrors of idolatry who have no knowledge of the true God; the number of missionaries is too small to preach the gospel everywhere, and the means insufficient to supply the needs of the poor, newly converted savages; to all this may be added the circumstance that the heretics likewise send their missionaries for the purpose of propagating their errors, spending at the same time immense sums of money with very little effect. What true Catholic heart, thinking of these dangerous circumstances, can look on quietly, while thousands of immortal souls for whom Jesus has shed His blood, are sinking into eternal damnation, because there is none to give them the bread of the word of God, none to enlighten their ignorance with the light of faith, none to point out to them the road to heaven! Do you say, my Christian, "But I cannot be a missionary and announce the gospel in distant lands?" Christ does not require it of you; but you can at least aid the immense work of propagating the faith by joining one of the societies founded in 1822 at Lyons, France, called the Missionary Society. Taking to heart the words of Jesus: The harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few; pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest, twelve pious men on the third of May, 1822, consulted among themselves how they could fulfil this wish of Jesus, supply the needs of missions and forward the work of propagating the faith. Having taken St. Francis Xavier for their patron, they established a society, all the members of which were to pray for the conversion of the infidels and heathens, and contribute as much to the support of the mission as they could afford, thus taking their part in the apostolic



work. The society, so small at first, blessed by God, spread in a short time over all France, and is now propagated almost over the entire world. Pope Pius VII. sanctioned the society and granted its members a great many indulgences. Leo XII., Pius VIII., and Gregory XVI. confirmed these indulgences, which may be applied to the suffering souls in purgatory. Christian soul, whoever you may be, if you truly love Jesus, your Saviour, if you are really a living member of His body, the Church, and rejoice that you possess the holy, only saving Catholic faith, then you cannot remain passive, seeing so many thousand souls turned from the tender heart of Jesus, and cast into the abyss of eternal perdition, by the spirit of error and of lies. You cannot see your mother, the holy Catholic Church, mourning, because so many whom she would wish to adopt as her children and bring up as citizens of heaven, are yet living apart from her embrace. No, you will not exclude yourself from a society which has shown such zeal for the salvation of souls, and which requires of you daily an "Our Father" and "Hail Mary" said with devotion, with a trifling alms of a few pennies every week. Join this society then, even if you do not possess much, and you will see at the hour of death, how Jesus will reward you, for He says: Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me. (*Matt. xxv. 40.*)

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF THE VIRGIN AND MARTYR ST. BARBARA.

[December 4.]



T. BARBARA was the daughter of a wealthy, distinguished, zealous pagan, named Dioscorus, who had her carefully brought up in the city of Nicomedia, where she was born. He wished to give her a superior education, and so caused her to be locked up in a tower, the better to keep her mind fixed upon science, to preserve her from intercourse with the world and the manners of vicious heathens. She was very beautiful, and possessed a keen intellect, a very tender heart susceptible to every good. The solitude of the tower caused her to think of herself and her creation. From the windows of the tower she contemplated the heavens brilliant



with stars, the fields, the hills, the forests in their loveliness, and it became evident to her that all this could not be the work of man, or of imaginary idols, but that a most superior Being must have made heaven and earth; from this arose the most fervent desire for the knowledge of the true God, and God who saw her desire, gratified it. But how Barbara came to the knowledge of Christ and His holy doctrine is unknown; it filled her with sweet consolation and childlike delight. From henceforth she despised the veneration of idols, she felt herself drawn more intimately to Jesus from day to day, the more she learned of the treasures hidden in Him, and for this reason, refused all offers for her hand, preferring to remain always a virgin. This appeared to her father strange conduct, but he counted it as a woman's caprice, fancying his daughter would change her mind before long. But he was mistaken. One day, returning from a journey, he perceived that she had constructed three windows and a cross in her bath-room; greatly surprised, he asked the reason, and received for answer: "I have done this, that I might have ever present before me the doctrine of the most holy Trinity which the Christians profess, and the grace of salvation through Jesus Christ, the Son of God," and then, with great enthusiasm, Barbara began to speak of the glory of Christianity and the abomination of idolatry, so that her father by surprise and anger was rendered mute. Enraged he drew his sword to slay her on the spot, but she escaped, and thus saved him from the shame of being the murderer of his own daughter. He, however, pursued her, and when he found her hidden in the shrubbery, he dragged her by the hair to the house, and in order to compel her to abandon her faith, treated her most cruelly; but Barbara was strengthened by her divine Bridegroom, and remained constant to her faith in Christ. The rage of her father knew no bounds. He hastened to the Governor Martian, and accused his daughter of scorning the gods. The governor caused her to be brought to his tribunal, seeking at first by flattery to lure her from the faith, but as this availed nothing, he had her scourged with cowhides. Barbara suffered patiently, persevering firmly and unalterably in her love for Jesus, who afterwards appeared to her in prison, consoled her and healed her wounds. She was again brought before the tribunal where she declared with renewed courage that she belonged to Christ and would never permit herself to be parted from Him. She was then made to unrobe, burned with torches and thus led through the streets of the city; but this agony and shame she endured for the sake of Christ, the Cruci-



fied, even thanked God for it. She was then ordered to be beheaded. At the place of execution her father suddenly appeared by her side, and overpowered by fiendish rage, with one stroke of his sword severed her head from the body. On account of this unnatural crime, he was soon afterwards struck by lightning and killed. The holy virgin Barbara was soon after her death venerated by the Catholic world as a glorious martyr. She is especially venerated and invoked as patroness of the dying, since a great number of persons have been by her intercession wonderfully provided with the last Sacraments.

*The Introit, Epistle and Gospel of this day are the same as on the Feast of St. Catharine. (November 25.)*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who among the many marvelous examples of Thy power, hast given even to the weaker sex the victory of martyrdom: mercifully grant, that we who celebrate the birthday to immortality of blessed Barbara, Thy virgin and martyr, may through her example, proceed onward to Thee. Thro'.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. NICHOLAS, BISHOP.

[December 6.]



HIS great servant of God, whom St. Peter Damian calls the one chosen of God from his mother's womb, the ward of sanctity in childhood, the beauty of young men, the honor of the old, the glory of the priesthood, and the light of bishops, was born at Patara in Lycia, in the year 280, and was the fruit of the prayers of his pious parents. Even as an infant he abstained on Wednesdays and Fridays from his mother's breasts, and continued to fast on these days to the end of his life. He passed through his childhood free from all levity, and in such innocence and piety, that he served every one as a model of sanctity. The early death of his parents left him heir to great wealth, which he distributed among the poor, particularly among those who were ashamed to beg, and gave the greater part to those whose poverty most endangered their salvation. Thus



## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. NICHOLAS, BISHOP. 627

a certain nobleman had three daughters, but his poverty did not permit him to give them in marriage, and to obtain money he was about to expose them to a life of infamy. St. Nicholas hearing this went in the stillness of the night, and threw money enough into the nobleman's house to suffice for a dowry for one of his daughters. This he twice repeated, and the maidens were married to virtuous men. On account of his great virtues he was found worthy to be set as a light to the world. The bishop's seat at Myra was vacant, and God revealed to the priests assembled for the election, that the one who should first enter the church on the following morning was to be made bishop. This proved to be Nicholas who at first refused, but at the earnest solicitation of his superiors, and to obey God, he finally accepted the dignity, and was consecrated bishop. His elevated position made him the more humble, charitable, and perfect in all virtue. God honored him with the gift of miracles, so that he was called the man of miracles, and to test his patience, permitted him to be persecuted for his faith; he was exiled, was put in chains, and thrown into prison until peace was restored to the Church. After his release he attacked with all energy the heresy of Arius, which denied the divinity of Christ. Exhausted by his untiring labors for the salvation of souls, and adorned with the brilliancy of the most beautiful virtues, he died in the year 327, after a short illness, repeating the words: "Lord, my soul has hoped in Thee; receive it into Thy hands!" In the year 1087 his relics were brought by some merchants to Bari, in the kingdom of Naples. It pleased God to work the most conspicuous miracles through these relics. St. Nicholas is generally represented in the robes of a bishop, with mitre and crosier, a Bible and three golden apples in his left hand. The Bible is to signify his zeal to keep the doctrines of Christ unstained, and the three golden apples the three maidens whom he rescued from infamy, as well as the many works of mercy he performed up to the time of his death.

The Introit of the Mass reads: The Lord made to him a covenant of peace, and made him a prince: that the dignity of priesthood should be to him forever. (*Ecclus* xlv.) O Lord, remember David, and all his meekness. (*Ps.* cxxxi.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who by innumerable miracles hast honored blessed Nicholas the Bishop: grant, we beseech Thee, that by his merits



and intercession we may be delivered from eternal flames. Thro'. &c.

EPISTLE. (*Hebr.* xiii. 7—17.) BRETHREN, remember your prelates who have spoken the word of God to you: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ yesterday, and to-day: and the same for ever. Be not led away with various and strange doctrines. For it is best that the heart be established with grace, not with meats: which have not profited those that walk in them. We have an altar, whereof they have no power to eat who serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the Holies by the high-priest for sin are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people by his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore to him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For we have not here a lasting city, but we seek one that is to come. By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise always to God, that is to say, the fruit of lips confessing to his name. And do not forget to do good and to impart; for by such sacrifices God's favor is obtained. Obey your prelates, and be subject to them. For they watch as being to render an account of your souls.

EXPLANATION. The apostle here admonishes the Hebrews, who although converted to Christianity, had still the idea that Judaism must be connected with Christianity, to honor their spiritual directors, to imitate their virtues and their living faith, which led them to a blessed and glorious end. He exhorts them to beware of strange and false doctrines, for Christ, that is, His doctrine, remains unchanged. He teaches them especially not to think too much of sacrifices and different sorts of food, which were ordered by the Jewish law, for these cannot strengthen the heart, cannot justify and sanctify us, this can be done only by the grace of the Gospel, namely: the use of the Sacraments, principally the most holy Sacrament of the Altar. Of this, indeed, the Jews who serve the tabernacle, that is,



those who observe the Old Law, are not allowed to partake, because the Law forbids them also to partake of the annual propitiatory sacrifice which was burnt outside the gates of the city of Jerusalem. This propitiatory sacrifice was a type of Jesus who, laden with ignominy by the Jews, also sacrificed Himself outside the gates of the city on the cross. If, therefore, they wish to have part in the sacrifice of Jesus, they must leave the camp, that is, give up the Old Law, cling with a firm faith to Jesus, and bear the reproach cast on Him. If they suffer with Him, it lasts not long, for we are here without an abiding place, seeking heaven. Through Christ, that is, by acknowledging Him as the true Redeemer, they should at all times bring to God the sacrifice of praise and connect this sacrifice with deeds of mercy, which are especially agreeable to God. They should faithfully obey their superiors, or pastors, because these pastors are concerned for their soul's salvation and are accountable for them.

As the Jews have no share in the sacrifice of Christ, because they observe the Old Law, so also you will have no share in it, so long as you remain with the world. Fly from the world and follow Christ, since you are often exhorted by spiritual superiors to whom you owe faithful obedience.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxv. 14—23.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke this parable to his disciples: A man going into a far country, called his servants, and delivered to them his goods. And to one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one, to every one according to his proper ability, and immediately he took his journey. And he that had received the five talents went his way, and traded with the same, and gained other five. And in like manner he that had received the two, gained other two. But he that received the one, going his way, digged into the earth, and hid his lord's money. But after a long time, the lord of those servants came and reckoned with them. And he that had received the five talents coming, brought other five talents, saying: Lord thou didst deliver to me five talents, behold, I have gained other five over and above. His lord said to him: Well



done, good and faithful servant: because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. And he also that had received the two talents came and said: Lord, thou deliveredst two talents to me, behold, I have gained other two. His lord said to him: Well done, good and faithful servant, because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

*Who is to be understood by the man going into a far country?*

By the man going into a far country is understood Christ, who by His ascension into heaven has left earth, but will come again at the judgment.

*What is to be understood by the talents?*

The talents are the gifts of God. They are of three kinds: viz. the gifts of nature; as for example, a keen intellect, a ready wit, a good memory, science and skill, as also health, strength and beauty; the gifts of grace; which are inspiration and enlightenment, faith, hope, charity, and other virtues; finally, the gift of miracles; the apostolate and pastorship, the power of discerning spirits, the gift of prophecy, of healing, of tongues, &c.

*How does God distribute these talents?*

God distributes His gifts in different ways, by virtue of His unlimited power, as Lord of all. To one He gives much, to another less. If one receives much, he must not become prodigal, if little, not faint-hearted, but work with that which he has received, according to his ability, for the honor of God, the good of his neighbor, and the salvation of his own soul. More than this God does not require, but He certainly exacts more from him who has received much, than from him who has received little.

*Who are meant by those who with five talents gained five, and with two talents gained two?*

Those who have worked faithfully with the gifts which God has given them. They deserve equal praise, and are equally rewarded for their fidelity by the householder. God does not judge of the extent of the merits, but his merciful eye regards our good will, obedience, diligence, and the obstacles under which we labored.



*Who are understood by the servant who buried his talent  
in the earth?*

Those who, whether in high or humble position, make no use of God's gifts, and will, therefore, be deprived of them at the Last Day, and cast into hell.

*Why does the Lord say: Enter thou into the joy of  
thy Lord?*

Because God rejoices at man's salvation, and because His faithful servants will find eternal joy in beholding and possessing Him in heaven.

PRAYER. I thank Thee, my divine Saviour, for all the gifts and graces which Thou hast given me, and I am grieved from my heart, that I have so ill used and neglected them. Be merciful to me, and give me the grace to use my talents, as did St. Nicholas, with all energy for Thy honor and my own salvation, so that Thou mayest say to me on the day of judgment: Well done, good and faithful servant: because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

*[December 8.]*



ON this day and the ensuing eight days, the Catholic Church celebrates with special solemnity the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

*What does the Catholic Church understand  
by the Immaculate Conception?*

By the Immaculate Conception she does not understand that great grace by which Mary preserved herself pure from every, even the least, actual sin; for, as concerns this, the Church has long since declared that





Mary never sinned: nor does she understand by it her continual virginity, for it has been for a long time a doctrine of faith that both before and after the birth of her divine Son Mary remained a pure virgin; nor yet that she was sanctified before birth, as were the Prophets Jeremias and John the Baptist, who were both conceived in sin, but by a special grace of God were released from it before their birth; neither does she understand by it the conception of Christ from the Holy Ghost, that is, that Mary unstained conceived the Son of God of the Holy Ghost, and without the assistance of man, for this was always the unalterable doctrine of the Church: she does understand by it that exalted favor, that unshared privilege, by which the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first moments of



her conception, by a special grace and favor on the part of God in reference to the merits of Jesus, our Saviour, was preserved from every stain of original sin.

*What has until now been held by the Church in regard to this privilege?*

The Catholic Church has always been of the pious opinion that Mary, the blessed Mother of the Redeemer, was conceived immaculate, that her most pure soul had never from the first moment of her existence the least shadow of sin. This doctrine was embraced by all the saints, the most learned and most faithful children of the Church. We have testimony of this, as far back as the times of the apostles, in a document concerning the sufferings of St. Andrew, in which it is said: "As the first man was created from the spotless earth, so was it necessary that the perfect man (Christ Jesus) should be born of an immaculate virgin." St. Justin, who died a martyr in the year 167 after Christ, compares the Blessed Virgin to Eve, before she sinned and while she was still a virgin. St. Amphilochus says: "He who created the first Eve free from shame, created the second without spot or stain." Origen, one of the Fathers of the Church, writes that she was neither surprised by the personated serpent, nor infected by his poison, and calls her a pure and immaculate mother. St. Ephrem calls her the undefiled, the strong, the inviolate, the most chaste virgin, far removed from all spot and stain. The Abbot St. Sabbas says of Mary: "On thee who never took part in any guile, I place my hope. No one but thou, O Lady, is without fault, and besides thee no one is unsullied and spotless." St. Ambrose calls Mary a virgin who by the grace of God remained always free from all shadow of sin. St. Augustine says: "When there is mention made of sin, the Virgin of whom on account of our Lord no question is to be asked, must be excepted." St. Proclus says, "that the holy Mother of God was made by the purest God free from all stain." St. Fulgentius says: "The wife of the first man was led astray and her soul soiled by the malice of sin, but in the mother of the second (Christ) the grace of God preserved the soul as well as the body inviolate." St. Paschasius Radbertus testifies: "It is certain that Mary was free from original sin;" and St. Peter Damian says: "The flesh of the Virgin taken from Adam, would not submit to the stain of Adam," and before him the pious Doctor Alcuin wrote of Mary: "Thou art beautiful as the moon and free from all spot and every shadow



of changeableness!" And St. Ildephonsus says: "It is certain that Mary was free from original sin." An immense number of saintly men and theologians maintained the same. Many of them argued with the greatest keenness and the most indefatigable zeal the part of the Blessed Virgin; the teachers at the universities of Paris, Salamanca, Coimbra, Naples, Cologne, Mayence, Ingolstadt, &c., made it their duty by vows to inculcate this great privilege of the most favored Virgin, and to defend it by speech and by writings. Celebrated orders of monks, especially the orders of St. Benedict, St. Francis and St. Ignatius, made it their duty to advance this pious faith of the Immaculate Conception among the people. A great number of popes and bishops also honored the Immaculate Conception, and forbade the contrary doctrine to be taught. Even kings, princes and emperors counted it a great honor to pay homage to the Immaculate Conception of the Queen of Heaven. Finally, the Catholic Church gave definite expression to this universal belief, by declaring in the Council of Trent, that in the resolutions relating to original sin, the Virgin Mary was not included, and she confirmed the festival of the Immaculate Conception, introduced in the tenth century by St. Anselm, the worthy son of the great St. Benedict, and since that time observed in all the Churches.

This veneration for the Immaculate Conception, this pious view held by the whole Catholic Church was not yet a matter of faith, that is, the Catholic Church had not yet laid down this great privilege of the Mother of God as a dogma. We were not commanded to believe it, although to preach or teach against it was forbidden. But when, in the course of time, a large number of the faithful, among whom were archbishops, bishops, whole religious orders, as well as great monarchs, besought the pope as head of the Church to pronounce concerning the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, that is, to elevate the belief so widely spread throughout the Catholic Church to a dogma, the pope could no longer hesitate to raise his voice in regard to this most important affair.

*What did the supreme pastor of the Church, the pope, then do in regard to the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin?*

Pope Pius IX. who, as he himself testified, had in many ways experienced the assistance of the great Queen of Heaven, was urged by his love and childlike veneration for the Blessed Mother of our Lord, to set the last brilliant diamond in her crown of glory by declaring the Immaculate Conception an article of faith. Not wishing to be pre-



cipitate, he first addressed a circular to all the primates, patriarchs, archbishops and bishops, of the whole Catholic world, February 2, 1849, requesting them to send him reports of the devotion of their clergy and the faithful concerning the Immaculate Conception, and the extent of their desire in the matter, that the case might be decided by the Apostolic See; at the same time he urged them to pray with him that God would give him the necessary enlightenment, and to call upon the clergy and the faithful for their prayers. When this was done, five hundred bishops in different parts of the world declared that they and their flocks firmly believed that Mary, the most favored Virgin, was preserved from every stain of original sin, and that they earnestly desired that the pope might raise this pious opinion to a dogma of the Church. Then the holy father, filled with delight, invited the bishops of the different countries to Rome, to consult with him upon the matter. About one hundred and fifty bishops, and a large number of learned men and superiors of spiritual orders, met at Rome and the whole subject was once more maturely examined; and at last, the 8th of December, 1854, the day on which the Church celebrates the feast of the Immaculate Conception, was appointed as the day on which the pope, the supreme head of the Church, the mouth of the apostles, should solemnly announce the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

On this day the holy father ascended the Apostolic Chair in the splendid Church of St. Peter at Rome, and surrounded by the assembled cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, the clergy and the people he once more invoked the light of the Holy Ghost, and amid the perfect silence which reigned in that immense church, the holy father in a loud voice and with the most profound reverence and emotion read the decree by which he solemnly pronounced and established, that:

“It is an article of faith that the Blessed Virgin Mary by a special grace and privilege of God, on account of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of mankind, was from the first instant of her conception protected and preserved from every stain of original sin.”

Thus has the head of Catholic Christianity drawn aside the veil, which until then obscured the full glory of the Queen of Heaven, which now shines in stainless loveliness radiant over the whole world. The truth that the Blessed Virgin Mary was conceived immaculate is no longer a pious opinion, but an article of faith which every Catholic who



wishes to remain a child of the Church, must profess with heart and with lips.

*But, perhaps the decision of the pope concerning the Immaculate Conception is a new doctrine?*

By no means; it is an old belief, established upon the holy Scriptures and laid down in the bosom of the Church, but not solemnly pronounced and made public previously. The pope cannot make a new article of faith, but he can and must announce that, as a revealed truth, which is established by the holy Scriptures and has been everywhere and at all times believed as a revealed truth by all true Christians. But if there is a truth founded on the holy Scriptures and tradition, of which the pope, the representative of Christ on earth, speaks officially, then every Catholic is bound to believe and openly to acknowledge the same. As we have already seen, the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception has been believed since the time of the apostles, and it is also established by the Scriptures. In the oldest of the sacred Books, in the Book of Genesis, (iii. 15.) is one of the most weighty passages on this subject which reads: I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel. After the fall of the first man, God spoke to the serpent, Satan, announcing that a woman would come and crush his head, that is, destroy his power; and all Catholic interpreters and holy Fathers agree that this woman is the Blessed Virgin. Mary is, therefore, placed by God Himself as Satan's enemy, and must have been free from original sin from the first moment of her conception, otherwise she would have been, as St. Paul, the Apostle, says, a child of God's wrath and under the power of Satan. In the gospel of St. Luke, (i. 28.) it is further said: And the Angel being come in, said unto her: Hail full of grace: the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou amongst women. The angel, by the direction of God, called Mary full of grace, that is, more than any of the just endowed with God's sanctifying grace, as the holy Fathers agree. But would Mary be full of sanctifying and all other graces, had she for one moment of her life been without grace and burdened with sin? Would God have permitted the Blessed Mother of His only-begotten Son, from whom He received flesh, to be touched by sin, even though for an instant, and be in the power of Satan? No; God's hand preserved her; by His grace and by the infinite merits of her divine Son she remained free from every stain of sin,



and the Church most justly applies to her the words of holy Scripture: Thou art all fair, O my love, and there is not a spot in thee. (*Cant.* iv. 7.)

*What instructive meaning has the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin for every Catholic?*

The Immaculate Conception teaches Catholics to know in some measure the infinite sanctity of the holy Trinity which makes sin so hateful and detestable to Him. The Heavenly Father could not see His beloved daughter for one moment stained by sin. The Divine Son could not wish to choose for His mother a virgin upon whose soul there was a vestige of sin. The Holy Ghost whose most pure bride Mary is, was not willing that her heart, His dwelling-place, should ever be for one instant soiled by sin. Behold how God detests sin! The Immaculate Conception also teaches us the inestimable treasure of sanctifying grace. Mary received this priceless treasure from God even in the first moment of her conception, without it she would never have become the Mother of the Saviour. Thou, my Christian, hadst not this treasure at thy conception, it is true, but thou didst receive it in holy baptism; there God's hand arrayed thee in the white garment of innocence; there He sanctified thy soul, and the Holy Ghost selected it for His dwelling-place. Mary preserved this inestimable treasure until death, she was always blooming as a pure lily, the breath of sin never soiled her loveliness. Ask thyself: Do I still possess this treasure, which was given to me in holy baptism; have I preserved my soul's beauty from the poison of sin, have I soiled it, destroyed it, lost it? Oh, if thou hast lost this precious gift, how unhappy art thou! if thou hast had this great misfortune to have stained thy garment of baptismal innocence by sin, Mary, the peerless virgin, has borne for thee the Saviour whose precious blood cleanses from every sin, whose infinite merits will restore to thee sanctifying grace, if thou art contrite and dost confess thy sin. But for the Saviour this treasure would be forever lost to thee, and thy soul forever forfeited. But for this Saviour Mary would not have been preserved from original sin, would not have received sanctifying grace at her conception. We can here learn the necessity of salvation through Christ, gratefully thank God who has given it to us, and praise Mary who had the grace to conceive and give birth to Him. In the Immaculate Conception, O Christian, thou canst learn to know something of the priceless value of virginity. Jesus chose a pure and immaculate virgin for His mother, who should be the mirror of



all virginal souls, her most pure and immaculate image should be continually presented to the corrupted world to show how virginity is esteemed in the eyes of our Lord.

Introit of the Mass: I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, and my soul shall be joyful in my God: for He hath clothed me with the garments of **salvation**: and with the robe of justice He hath covered me, as a bride adorned with her jewels. (*Isai. lxi. 10.*) I will extol Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast upheld me: and hast not made my enemies to rejoice over me. (*Ps. xxix.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who by the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, didst prepare a worthy habitation for Thy Son: we beseech Thee, that as Thou didst through the foreseen death of Thy same Son, preserve her from all stain, so Thou wilt also grant that we may reach Thee cleansed through her intercession. Through the same Jesus &c.

LESSON. (*Prov. viii. 22—35.*) The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, before he made any thing, from the beginning. I was set up from eternity, and of old, before the earth was made. The depths were not as yet, and I was already conceived: neither had the fountains of waters as yet sprung out: the mountains with their huge bulk had not as yet been established: before the hills I was brought forth: he had not yet made the earth, nor the rivers, nor the poles of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was present; when, with a certain law and compass, he enclosed the depths; when he established the sky above, and poised the fountains of waters; when he compassed the sea with its bounds, and set a law to the waters, that they should not pass their limits; when he balanced the foundations of the earth. I was with him, forming all things, and was delighted every day, playing before him at all times, playing in the world; and my delights were to be with the children of men. Now, therefore, ye children, hear me: Blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise,



and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, and that watcheth daily at my gates, and waiteth at the posts of my door. He that shall find me shall find life, and shall have salvation from the Lord.

EXPLANATION AND APPLICATION. This lesson is first a panegyric on the divine, uncreated Wisdom, the eternal Son of God, who at all times and before all things was with God and in God, by whom was made everything that was made, ordered and preserved; who rejoices in His works, loves them, and who admonishes man to love and imitate Him, and promises him eternal and temporal happiness. The Church causes this lesson to be read on this day, because the greater part of it can be applied to Mary; for it can truly be said of her, that she, as the most holy and excellent of all creatures, possessed the first place in the heart of God. For this reason the Church applies to her the words of the wise man: I came out of the mouth of the most High, the first-born before all creatures. (*Ecclus.* xxiv. 5.) For, as St. Richard says, she is the most worthy of all; no one has received so full a measure of purity, and of all supernatural gifts; in no creature are the marvels of divine goodness so visible as in her. Admire, devout soul, this master-piece of Almighty God, and make frequent use of the words of St. Chrysostom:

“Hail Mother of God and our Mother! Hail O Heaven in which God Himself dwells! O Throne of grace from which the Lord distributes His graces! Pray always to Jesus for us, that on the Day of Judgment we may receive forgiveness and eternal salvation.”

GOSPEL. (*Luke* i. 26—28.) AT THAT TIME, The angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And the Angel being come in, said unto her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women.

*Why is this gospel read to-day?*

Because it has a significant relation to the Immaculate Conception, and proclaims the great honor shown to the Blessed Virgin by these words: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women.



*Why did the angel call Mary full of grace?*

Because Mary was filled with grace, even before she came into this world; because she always increased in grace; because she was to bear the Author of all grace; that we may consider how Mary obtains for us the treasures of divine grace.

Mary was filled with grace even before her birth. As we are all conceived in sin, being children of a sinful ancestor, we are, therefore, burdened by sin before our birth. Mary was free by the privilege of the Immaculate Conception from all sin; her soul, pure and adorned with sanctifying grace, came forth from the hands of the Creator, and without the least prejudice to its purity and sanctity was united to her most pure body, from which the Saviour was to take His humanity. She could not from the first instant of her existence be wanting in that original sanctity and justice, which were the most beautiful adornments of our natural ancestress, Eve.

But Mary from the first moment of her conception was not only in grace but full of grace, because God appointed her for the highest dignity, of being the Mother of His only-begotten Son, and had consequently endowed her with the full measure of corresponding plenitude of graces and gifts of the Holy Ghost; according to the opinion of many learned men, the measure of grace which the Blessed Virgin received at her Immaculate Conception, was greater than that which all the angels and blessed possess now in glory.

Mary ever increased in grace: But the path of the just, as a shining light, goeth forward and increaseth even to perfect day. (*Prov. iv. 18.*) These words of the Holy Ghost are verified especially in the life of the Blessed Virgin. What abundance of grace did she not receive, when the Holy Ghost overshadowed her, and the divine Son, who is Himself the infinite plenitude of grace, was conceived in her most pure body! Above all this, there yet came that rich supply of grace by which her zealous, constant, perfect and faithful coöperation made Mary increase every moment in grace. Thus St. Bonaventure says: "As all the waters meet in the sea, so all the graces were united in Mary."

*Why did the angel say to Mary: The Lord is with thee?*

Because God is with the Blessed Virgin in an extraordinary manner. It is well to notice particularly, that the archangel Gabriel did not say to Mary as the angel did to Gideon: The Lord be with thee, (*Judges vi. 12.*) but: The Lord is with thee. These words are not, therefore,



the wish that the favor, the blessing, the protection of God may be with Mary, but the positive declaration that the Lord really is with her, not simply because of His omnipotence and omnipresence by which He is with all His creatures, nor merely because of His goodness, love and intimacy by which He is with all the just. He is with her in a peculiar manner, since she by her dignity of being the Mother of God came into such close relationship with the Triune God that our intellect can conceive nothing nearer. She became the chosen Mother of the Son of God, the dearest, the most favored daughter of the Heavenly Father, and the pure, beloved bride of the Holy Ghost. "God the Father was with her," says St. Bonaventure, "as with His most noble Daughter; God the Son was with her as with His most worthy Mother; God the Holy Ghost was with her as with His most pure Bride."

*Why did the angel say to Mary: Blessed art thou amongst women?*

Because he desired to honor her as the most blessed of her sex, since she alone was chosen of all the others to be the Mother of God; because the first woman brought the curse, but Mary, the salvation of the world.

Mary, Mother of God! An honor, indeed, which in its exaltation is second only to divinity. Mary, the Virgin Mother of God! Mother and Virgin at the same time, what a wonderful prerogative! Though the greatest and most glorious of all mothers, she is the purest and most spotless of virgins, the queen of virgins.

But not only on account of her double glory as Mother of God and as a Virgin, Mary is the most blessed of her sex, but because it was given to her to mediate for us and for the whole world. She is that woman, promised to our first and sinful parents in Paradise, who would crush the serpent's head; she gave to her Son the body with which He, by His death on the cross, accomplished the great work of salvation.

ACT OF PRAISE. "Praised and blessed be the holy and Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary!"

*(Pope Pius VI. granted an indulgence of one hundred days to those who, with contrition and devotion repeat the above act of praise.)*





## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. THOMAS, THE APOSTLE.

[December 21.]



THOMAS, also called Didymus, that is, twin, was a Galilean and a fisherman. Having been received by Christ as one of the apostles, he accompanied our divine Saviour on all His journeys, shunning no danger. His courage and faithful adherence to his divine Master, were especially manifested at the time when our Lord went to Bethania to raise Lazarus to life, when the disciples were afraid to accompany Him because the Jews sought His life. Let us also go, Thomas said to the other disciples, that we may die with him. (*John xi. 16.*) His belief in Christ's resurrection wavered for a time, but scarcely had Christ convinced him by showing His wounds, than he, strong in faith, cried out: My Lord and my God! St. Gregory says on this subject: "God permitted St. Thomas to doubt for our instruction; and his incredulity is of more advantage to us than the ready faith of the other disciples, for he induced Christ to give us clearer proofs of His resurrection, thus strengthening our faith therein." After he had received the Holy Ghost, at Pentecost, and had preached the gospel in Judea for some time, St. Thomas at the dispersion of the apostles went to the Eastern nations; to the Persians, Medes, Armenians, Hyrcanians, Bactrians, and according to later reports the doctrine of Jesus was heard from his lips in India and China. What trials, hardships and persecutions must he not have suffered on these long journeys among unbelievers! According to the Roman Martyrology he died the death of a martyr, being pierced with lances at Calamnia, now called Meliapor, a city of India.

For three years Thomas had continually associated with Jesus, seen His miracles, and heard His doctrine, especially the doctrine of His resurrection, which He had often plainly foretold; and yet he doubted and found it hard to accept this truth. Whence came this? We find no other explanation than human weakness, or perhaps a little failing, occasioned probably by the intemperate sorrow at the death of Jesus, which caused Thomas to separate himself from the other apostles, who with Mary, the mother of the faith-



ful, were assembled, occupied in prayer and pious conversation, and thus to lose Christ's first appearance. If Thomas was in this manner shaken in his faith, how will it be with those Christians who have an aversion to spiritual exercises, prayers and edifying reading; who, on the contrary, read irreligious books, and associate only with indifferent persons who deride our faith?

*[For the Introit of the Mass see the Feast of St. Andrew.]*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant us, Lord, we beseech Thee, to glory in the solemnity of blessed Thomas Thy apostle: that we may ever be aided by his patronage, and follow his faith with true devotion. Thro'. &c.

EPISTLE. (*Ephes. ii. 19—22.*) BRETHREN, you are no more strangers and foreigners: but you are fellow-citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone: in whom all the building, being framed together, groweth up into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are built together into an habitation of God in the spirit.

EXPLANATION. The apostle here says to the Ephesians and to all baptized Christians: Now that you are baptized, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, that is, without the rights of a citizen, as before when you were yet Gentiles; you are by baptism fellow citizens with the saints, and belong to the large family of God, to the Church; you have, therefore, part in its riches, and are heirs of heaven. The Church to which you belong is firmly founded on the teachings and faith of the prophets and apostles, having for their corner-stone Christ, who unites you with Him, who holds the entire building together and causes the Church to spread itself, receiving ever more and more faithful souls within it, whom He by His grace purifies and sanctifies; and thus there stands a holy spiritual temple, of which Christ is the corner-stone, the apostles its foundation, its spiritual stones the living Christians. What a happiness is yours, that you by baptism have been brought into this temple as a living stone in its walls! But if you do not preserve the living faith in Christ, if you live not in accordance



with His doctrine, then to your greatest misfortune you will be cast out as unfit for this temple, the Church.

*[See Gospel and Explanation for first Sunday after Easter.]*

## PRACTICAL INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING FAITH AND SUPERSTITION.

**T**HE just man, says St. Paul, liveth by faith, (*Rom. i. 17.*) that is, as a farmer lives by his labor, an artist by his art, receiving his food and support from it, so the true Christian finds the life, health and strength of his soul in his faith. And as material life shows itself by certain external acts and signs, so the spiritual life manifests itself by actions dictated by faith: he who possesses this spiritual life prays fervently, gives alms according to his means, exercises himself in all charitable deeds towards his neighbor, fasts and lives strictly, walks in the presence of God, avoiding every sin, and he performs all because he is animated by a lively faith which teaches him that God is a just judge, the severe punisher of all evil, the liberal rewarder of all good, who Himself has said that heaven must be gained by violence, and only those who use violence can enter therein. An indifferent Christian, on the other hand, who has only a dead faith, does nothing of what it requires, but sets his heart on temporal things, seeks only the happiness of this world, and to gain it, does not even avoid superstitious means. Superstition consists in ascribing to things a supernatural power which they have not from God and his Church. They even seek aid of evil spirits. It is, therefore, superstition to apply to vain or sinful purposes that which is instituted by Christ and His Church for the salvation of souls. There are people so blind, as to fancy that nothing is necessary for success in searching for a concealed treasure, but a Mass said at midnight. They imagine that by the repetition of certain prayers they will have success in a lottery, or by diligently saying such and such prayers, and wearing amulets, &c., they are sure of salvation. This is superstition and sin, for these things have no power or influence. It is superstition to believe that by prayers, blessings, conjurations, &c., received from wicked persons, sickness can be cured, danger avoided, and injuries inflicted on others; that by cards, future events can be predicted, and by vain interpretation of dreams, lotteries be won. Those who believe in such deceivers or ask their advice, are guilty of superstition. The most abominable superstition is practiced by those who go so far as to seek help and advice from



evil spirits, since they have nothing good in them, nor of themselves possess any knowledge. "By the just judgment of God," says St. Augustine, "it sometimes happens that those superstitious men, who seek to find hidden things from evil spirits, are made over curious and become involved in the manifold snares of pernicious error." How sinful such superstition is, is evident from its own nature, since by it we set aside God and have no confidence in Him. If God curses those who turn their hearts from Him, and place their confidence in man, (*Jer.* xvii. 5.) what must those expect who practice these superstitions? If you have fears that certain things are superstitious, consult your pastor, and follow his advice.

PETITION. O most benign Jesus, who didst permit the doubting and wavering Thomas to touch Thy sacred wounds, and thus didst free him from his unbelief, heal me also, and give me a firm and lively faith, which will continually urge me to do only that which is pleasing to Thee.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. STEPHEN, THE FIRST MARTYR.

[*December 26.*]

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THE epistle of this day, taken from the Acts of the apostles, contains a short history of the life and sufferings of this saint. It is only necessary to add, that on account of his virtues, his wisdom and zeal for the faith, St. Stephen was held worthy by the apostles of being ordained, by the imposition of hands, the first of the seven deacons whose duty it was, besides announcing the word of God, to attend to the poor, and distribute alms among them. In the performance of these duties St. Stephen united such disinterested love for his neighbor, with such zeal for Christ, that he drew upon himself the most intense hatred of the Jews, who finally stoned him to death, thus making him the first martyr for Christ.

The Introit of the Mass is from Psalm cxviii: Princes sat and spoke against me; and the wicked persecuted me; help me, O Lord my God, for thy servant was



employed in thy justifications. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant us grace, O Lord, we beseech Thee, so to imitate what we revere that we may learn to love even our enemies: as we now celebrate the birthday to immortality of him who knew to ask forgiveness even for his persecutors, of Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth &c.

LESSON. (*Acts* vi. 8—10 and vii. 54—59.) IN THOSE DAYS, Stephen, full of grace and fortitude, did great wonders and signs among the people. Now there arose some of that which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of them that were of Cilicia and Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit that spoke. Now hearing these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed with their teeth at him. But Stephen being full of the Holy Ghost, looking up steadfastly to heaven, saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. And he said: Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. And they, crying out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and with one accord ran violently upon him. And casting him forth without the city, they stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, invoking and saying: Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And falling on his knees, he cried with a loud voice, saying: Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep in the Lord.

INSTRUCTION. St. Stephen's innocence and sanctity were so great, that the angry Jews could not bring the least thing against him. They, therefore, procured false witnesses who were required to testify that he had blas-





phemed God and the law; but severe as this accusation was, it did not disturb St. Stephen, because his conscience acquitted him. Learn hence, that there is no greater tormenter than a bad conscience, no better defender than a good one; for a good conscience is a continual feast, (*Prov.* xv. 15.) and the best comforter in all adversities; it goes with us into prison, is with us in distress, in death, yes, even before the judgment-seat of God. Though so innocent St. Stephen prayed for his persecutors who unjustly and maliciously persecuted and stoned him. Were not St. Stephen and other saints, who did the same, men as we are? Can we not also, with God's grace, do what they have done? If we do not wish to do it, then we cannot



call ourselves Christians; for the love of our neighbor, even of our enemy, is the principal mark of a Christian, and only by such love can we be true children of the Heavenly Father who maketh His sun to rise upon the good and the bad, and reigneth upon the just and the unjust. (*Matt.* v. 45.)

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxiii. 34—39.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to the Scribes and Pharisees: Behold, I send to you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them you will put to death, and crucify, and some you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city: that upon you may come all the just blood that hath been shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel the just, even unto the blood of Zacharias, the son of Barachias, whom you killed between the temple and the altar. Amen, I say to you, all these things shall come upon this generation. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldst not! Behold, your house shall be left to you desolate. For I say to you, you shall not see me henceforth till you say: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

*Who are here understood by the prophets, wise men and scribes?*

The apostles and disciples of Christ; "for these," says St. Jerome, "received different gifts of the Holy Ghost; some by the gift of prophecy foretold future events, some have known by the wisdom imparted to them, things which they should say, and the time in which to say them; others had through their science a perfect knowledge of the law."

*Did the Jews really put any of these to death?*

Yes, they stoned Stephen, they beheaded James the brother of John; cast down another James from the temple, scourged Peter and others, exiled John, while Paul and Barnabas suffered one persecution after another. St. Paul says: All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. (*ii Tim.* iii. 12.)





*What is meant by the words: that upon you may come all the just blood?*

This means that the guilt and punishment would come upon the Jews for all the innocent blood shed by their fathers, whose wickedness they sanctioned, and even followed. "Those who follow the wicked," says St. Augustine, "are not only punished as they deserve, for their own guilt, but for the guilt of those whom they follow."

*Why does Christ here compare Himself to a hen?*

Because Christ had and still has the most sincere love and the most tender care for the salvation of the Jews and



of all men; and as a hen calls her wandering little ones to her side, warns them of danger, and shelters them under her wings, so that nothing evil befalls them, "so Christ sought during His whole life," says St. Hilarion, "to save us by His doctrine, sighs and sufferings; and as the hen exhausts herself and becomes, for love of her brood, entirely enfeebled, so for love of us and to cure our weakness, Christ became a frail man; and as the hen turns here and there in accordance with her chickens, so Christ, full of mercy and compassion, moves in compliance with our capacity and our need." In this love He can and should be imitated by pastors, parents and heads of families, who should endeavor to keep those under their charge from doing wrong, and by prayers, admonitions, exhortations and warnings preserve them from danger.

*Who are those that stone the pastors and put them to death?*

They are those who by evil reports insult their pastors and lessen their influence, despise their priests and ridicule their sermons. To such persons it may happen as it did to the Jews, that the faith will be taken from them and given to others more deserving.

*What is meant by the house made desolate?*

In the literal sense these words refer to the temple of Jerusalem, which with the city was destroyed by the Romans forty years after the death of Christ; but in the figurative sense they represent the moral condition of the sinner who departs from the grace and guardianship of God, falls a prey to his enemies, and is hurried to perdition.

SUPPLICATION TO ST. STEPHEN. St. Stephen, full of grace, love and strength, thy innocence was so great that thy countenance shone like an angel's, I beseech thee by the grace received at thy death, of seeing the heavens open and Jesus at the right hand of His Father, that thou wouldst ask from God for me, that, through purity of conscience and meekness of love, I may after thy example, forgive all who insult me, pray for them, not only wishing them good, but doing them good in very deed, and thus receive the grace of a happy death. Through Christ &c.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. JOHN, THE APOSTLE.

[December 27.]



JOHN, the son of Zebedee and of Salome, and brother of St. James the Greater, born about eight years later than Christ, was the youngest of the apostles, and before being called by Christ was a fisherman, and disciple of St. John the Baptist. When Jesus called him and his brother, they were mending their nets by the sea of Galilee. He obeyed the call and became our Lord's constant companion, and was, with Peter and James, His most intimate disciple. Our Lord loved him above all the others, especially on account of his great purity of heart, and gave him the most tender proofs of His affection, so much so, that at the Last Supper St. John was permitted to lean upon the Saviour's breast; our Lord when dying, gave His beloved Mother into his care, and she was taken home by St. John, who never again left her. When the apostles dispersed to preach the gospel in different parts of the world, St. John went to Asia Minor, where he founded many congregations, and that he might be near them, he established his seat at Ephesus. He was taken to Rome in the year 95, during the reign of the cruel Emperor Domitian, and cast into a kettle of boiling oil; by divine assistance he was preserved in a wonderful manner, but was banished by the emperor to the island of Patmos, now called Palmosa. Here he received those marvellous revelations, called the Apocalypse, which are included in the holy Scriptures, and foretell the fate of the Church of God. After the death of Domitian, St. John returned to Ephesus, where at the prayer of the faithful, and to refute the heresy which denied the divinity of Christ, he wrote his gospel, in which he soars like an eagle to the subject of Christ's divinity, and proves it indisputably against the heresies of Ebion and Cerinthus. About the same time he also wrote his three epistles, wherein he urges especially the love of God and our neighbor. He constantly inculcated this love, especially in his old age, and when he could no longer, because of the weakness of age, deliver long sermons, he would always, when he appeared among the faithful, repeat these words: "My children, love one another," and when once asked why he said



always the same thing, he replied: "This is the commandment of the Lord, and who observes this, does enough." St. John believed he could not better repay the love which Christ had shown him, than by infusing into all hearts the holy love, which is the perfect bond and the mark of the true disciple of Jesus. St. John survived all the apostles; at last, in the year 100 of our era, Christ called to Himself by a placid death, the man of nearly a hundred years, whom He loved so much. The sepulchre of the saint, which is on a hill outside the city of Ephesus, has been glorified by many miracles.

The Introit of the Mass reads: In the midst of the Church the Lord opened his mouth: and filled him with the spirit of wisdom and understanding: and clothed him with a robe of glory. (*Ecclus.* xv. 5.) It is good to give praise to the Lord: and to sing to thy name, O Most High. (*Ps.* xci.) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Of Thy goodness, O Lord, enlighten Thy Church; that being illumined by the doctrines of blessed John Thy Apostle and Evangelist, she may attain to everlasting gifts. Thro'. &c.

LESSON. (*Ecclus.* xv. 1—6.) He that feareth God, will do good: and he that possesseth justice, shall lay hold on her, and she will meet him as an honorable mother. With the bread of life and understanding she shall feed him, and give him the water of wholesome wisdom to drink; and she shall be made strong in him, and he shall not be moved: and she shall hold him fast, and he shall not be confounded; and she shall exalt him among his neighbors, and in the midst of the Church she shall open his mouth, and shall fill him with the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and shall clothe him with the robe of glory. The Lord our God shall heap upon him a treasure of joy and gladness, and shall cause him to inherit an everlasting name.

#### ON PURITY.

**T**HE Holy Ghost says: Wisdom will not enter into a malicious soul, nor dwell in a body subject to sins. (*Wisd.* i. 4.) From his childhood St. John was an



angel of purity, and was on this account especially loved by Jesus, and gifted by the Holy Ghost with such wisdom and understanding, that, as observed by St. Augustine, "he commences his gospel in a grander and nobler strain than that used by the other three evangelists." For while they walk on earth with the God Man, saying but little concerning His divinity, St. John, as if forgetting the world, soars far above earth, beyond the vault of heaven, above even the angelic hosts, to Him by whom all things were made, saying: In the beginning was the Word. At the Last Supper he was permitted to lean upon our Lord's breast, and that which he silently imbibed in that union, he afterwards openly imparted. Strive, therefore, to maintain purity of heart, that thou mayest like St. John be a loved disciple of Christ, and be filled with heavenly wisdom.

GOSPEL. (*John* xxi. 19.—24.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to Peter: Follow me. Peter turning about, saw that disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also leaned on his breast at supper, and said: Lord, who is he that shall betray thee? Him, therefore, when Peter had seen, he saith to Jesus: Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith to him: So I will have him to remain till I come, what is it to thee? follow thou me. This saying therefore, went abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die. And Jesus did not say to him, he should not die; but: So I will have him to remain till I come, what is it to thee? This is that disciple who giveth testimony of these things, and hath written these things; and we know that his testimony is true.

*What did Christ mean by the words: So I will have him to remain till I come. Follow thou me?*

He indicated that St. John was not to die by violence, but naturally, while Peter was to be crucified, as our Lord had foretold. (*John* xxi. 18.)

*Why did not our Lord answer Peter's question?*

He wished to rebuke his inquisitiveness, and to teach him that we should not be curious concerning our neighbor's affairs. He who interferes over much in his neigh-



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bor's concerns is apt to neglect his own, and cause himself much annoyance and inconvenience.

**SUPPLICATION TO ST. JOHN.** O St. John, beloved disciple of Christ, thou who didst lean upon His breast at the Last Supper, and to whom He entrusted His Mother, I beseech thee by these great graces, to obtain for me and all men purity of heart, sincere devotion to the dying Saviour and His blessed Mother, an ardent love for God and our neighbor, and finally, a happy death.

*Why is wine blessed on this day, and given to the faithful to drink?*

That those who drink of this blessed wine may be preserved from all diseases of body and soul, as God preserved St. John, who to confirm the truth of the Christian religion, drank poisoned wine without being injured by it; and that we may by St. John's intercession be strengthened and confirmed in the faith, and be inflamed with the love of God and our neighbor, of which this wine is a figure. Consequently when presenting the wine, the priest says: Drink the love of St. John, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

*NOTE. This custom of blessing wine on the feast of St. John is observed in many places in Europe. It is generally omitted in the United States.*

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS.

[December 28]



HE gospel of this day gives the history of the death of these children whom the Church regards as martyrs, because though they could not confess Christ with their lips, they did so by the death which they suffered on account of Herod's hatred of Christ.

The Introit of the Mass: Out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise because of thy enemies. O Lord our Lord, how admirable is thy name in the whole earth! (*Ps. viii.*) Glory &c.



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, whose praise Thy martyrs the Innocents did on this day confess, not by speech, but by their deaths, mortify in us all the evils of vice, that Thy faith, which our tongue professes, our life also by its deeds may declare. Thro'. &c.

LESSON. (*Apoc.* xiv. 1—5.) IN THOSE DAYS, I saw upon Mount Sion a Lamb standing, and with him a hundred forty-four thousand having his name, and the name of his Father written on their foreheads. And I heard a noise from heaven, as the noise of many waters, and as the voice of great thunder; and the voice which I heard was as the voice of harpers, harping on their harps. And they sung as it were a new canticle before the throne, and before the four living creatures, and the ancients; and no man could say the canticle but those hundred forty-four thousand who were purchased from the earth. These are they who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were purchased from among men, the first-fruits to God and to the Lamb, and in their mouth there was found no lie; for they are without spot before the throne of God.

EXPLANATION AND APPLICATION. This vision of St. John is applied to the holy Innocents because on account of their innocence they are ranked with the virgins of whom mention is here made. St. John describes the prerogatives of purity, and relates that he had seen the Lamb of God, Christ, on Mount Sion, that is, in heaven, surrounded by one hundred and forty-four thousand virgins. There is here given a definite number to represent the multitude of those who preserve their innocence through life. These are distinguished from the other saints, by the name of the Lamb which is marked upon them and are in a greater measure like unto Him, and enjoy His company in an especial manner, which is manifested by the new canticle which none of the other saints can sing. Mark the great preference which virginal innocence holds in heaven;



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God raises the virginal soul above all the other saints in heaven. And can you throw away this heavenly virtue, this most precious of pearls, for a vain, passing pleasure, which never satisfies the soul, but on the contrary fills it with pain and disgust? By no means; ever preserve, then, the robe of innocence free from all spots, and if you have stained or lost it by sin, hasten to do penance, that you may be received with the sainted penitents into the joy of God and His angels.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* ii. 13—18.) AT THAT TIME, an Angel of the Lord appeared in sleep to Joseph, saying: Arise, and take the child and his mother, and fly into Egypt; and be there until I shall tell thee: for it will come to pass that Herod will seek the child to destroy him. Who arose, and took the child and his mother by night, and retired into Egypt; and he was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet, saying: Out of Egypt have I called my son. Then Herod, perceiving that he was deluded by the wise Men, was exceeding angry; and sending, killed all the men-children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the borders thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremias the prophet, saying: A voice in Rama was heard, lamentation and great mourning; Rachel bewailing her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

*Why did Herod seek the life of Christ?*

Because carried away by pride and ambition, he feared that by this child, whom the wise men named King of the Jews, he would be deprived of his throne which he had unjustly usurped, and to obtain which he had caused even his son and nearest relations to be put to death.

How ruinous is it to give oneself up to pride! To what will not this passion often lead men! Seek well if the inclination to pride has not taken root in your heart! Strive, while considering your misery, your poverty and



your sinfulness, to weed it out at once, despise yourself, and continually pray for the spirit of true humility.

*Who are like Herod?*

All those who kill innocent children either in body or soul; for example, all imprudent, careless women who by excessive dancing, by carrying or lifting heavy burdens, by hurtful eating or drinking, by violent anger or immoderate grief, injure the fruit of their wombs; brutal men who treat harshly, even strike, beat or provoke to anger their wives while in a state of pregnancy; careless parents who take their children into bed with them, at the risk of suffocating them in their sleep; corrupt and godless women who destroy the fruit of their shame before birth, and thus send them without baptism into the other world. But more cruel even than these, far more cruel than Herod, are those who scandalize the innocent, that is, lead them into sin by holding improper conversations, singing bad songs; making indecent jokes and using immodest words in the presence of children, thus enticing them into this abominable kind of sin. Jesus pronounces a terrible curse upon such people.

*What punishment did Herod receive for his cruelties?*

He was attacked shortly after by a most painful and disgusting disease which was so offensive that he was deserted by every one; eaten by worms and other vermin he died in the greatest despair.

If Herod, the murderer of the bodies of the holy Innocents, was so fearfully punished by God, what must the murderers of innocent souls expect?

*What is meant by the words: A voice in Rama was heard?*

St. Chrysostom says: "If we are asked why Rachel bewailing her children is mentioned here, when it is only the children of Bethlehem that are spoken of, and what connection there is between Rachel and Rama, we answer: Rachel very properly appears here showing her distress, for she was the mother of Benjamin (from whom the holy Innocents descended) and he had been buried in the vicinity of Bethlehem, which was also near Rama, in the land of the tribe of Benjamin. And as Rachel was the mother of the prince of this tribe, and this place contained the ashes of the mother, the holy Scripture names the children who were killed, the children of Rachel." From these words may be understood the grief of the mothers, for their murdered children.



To weep for the loss of children is most natural, but to weep immoderately is not wise. How can the Christian mother be inconsolable for the loss of her children whom God has taken to Himself? Is it not better for them to be with God in heaven than to live here on earth, exposed to dangers, and perhaps be lost forever.

### OTHER USEFUL AND CONSOLING LESSONS.

**G**OD saved His Son from the hands of Herod in a natural way, by flight, although He could have guarded Him in other ways. He wished to teach us that we should not expect Him to help us miraculously, so long as He can aid us in a natural manner. We should learn from the ready obedience with which Jesus, Mary, and Joseph submitted, without questioning God's orders and arrangements, or murmuring against them, to submit in ready obedience to God's dispositions without inquiring or complaining about them.

The adverse incidents which these most holy persons, Jesus, Mary and Joseph had to meet in their lives, teach us that God takes pleasure in trying and perfecting His own by proving them through trials and vicissitudes. Dare we, then, murmur when God so tries us?

Herod sought to slay Jesus, and to secure his end caused a number of innocent children to be murdered, and yet Jesus escaped him. What are the plans of the wicked against God and His chosen ones? He who fears God and serves Him, against him all the powers of hell can do nothing.

### SUPPLICATION TO THE HOLY INNOCENTS.

I salute you, innocent little martyrs, who glorified God not by your words, but by your death. What happiness was yours to pass into eternal life almost before you had commenced the temporal! What happiness is now yours who continually follow the true Lamb of God, Jesus Christ! O pray for us, that we may ever confess the faith in Jesus with heart and with lips, and by a pious Christian life, through sufferings and trials, reach Christ whom you enjoy now and forever.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. VALENTINE, BISHOP.

[January 7.]

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**S**T. VALENTINE, moved by zeal for the propagation of the kingdom of Christ, came in the middle of the fifth century to that part of the country near which the Rivers Inn and Danube meet, and where the city of Passau now stands, in order that he might preach the gospel there; whence he came, is not known. There were already many Christians in this country; but, alas! they were given up to the heresy of Arius who denied the divinity of Christ, therefore, St. Valentine's words produced no effect. He found it necessary to go to Rome to obtain permission from the holy Father Pope Leo I. to preach elsewhere the doctrines of Christ. The Pope was surprised to see the saint, and when he heard the reason of his coming, said to him: "Go and preach the faith; be instant in season and out of season; glorious will be the fruit of your trouble, if you are prepared to endure and soften the hardness of this obstinate people. But if you fail, you may with my permission and authority become the messenger of the faith to other countries." After being consecrated bishop, St. Valentine departed, strengthened by the apostolic benediction. Animated anew he returned to Passau, but still his words were without effect. Heretics and pagans united against him, and forced him to leave. With a sorrowful heart he turned towards Rhaetia, which was at that time a part of Bavaria, Switzerland, and Swabia, and there announced the faith of the cross with such effect that thousands were converted to Christ. The saint advanced, the cross in his hand, into the mountains of Switzerland, then to the mountains of Tyrol, into the fruitful Vintsgau, also called Passayer-Thal, where in the midst of lofty mountains he found hearts ready to receive the word of God. The simple inhabitants came to him with childlike confidence, listening eagerly to his words, and joyfully confessed Christ, the Crucified. He settled at Mais, not far from Meran, where he saw in a short time a rich harvest spring up around him. A little cell, which is even to this day shown in the castle of Newburg, was his dwelling, in which, when not preaching, he spent day and night. When his declining strength would not permit him to attend to



all those souls who had received the word of God, he founded a society of priests to assist him, among whom he lived as a father among his children, until on the 7th of January, 470, God called him to Himself. Duke Thassilo of Bavaria carried his sacred remains to Passau, where they are held in veneration to this day.

*[The Introit, Epistle and Gospel as on the sixth of December.]*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Be merciful to us, Thy servants, we beseech Thee, O Lord, by the glorious merits of the blessed Valentine, Confessor and Bishop, that by his intercession we may be preserved from all evils, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. ANTHONY, ABBOT AND FATHER OF HERMITS.

*[January 17.]*



ANTHONY, whom the succeeding ages surnamed the Great, and whose life was written by St. Athanasius, was born at Coma, a village in Upper Egypt. His noble and pious parents withheld their son from all enticements of the world, so that Anthony knew only his parents and younger sister. He consequently visited no school, and remained ignorant regarding human science. Nevertheless, he was eminent in knowledge, was obedient, pious, and a zealous visitor of the churches, as were his parents. At the age of eighteen death deprived him of his parents. From this moment the management of domestic affairs devolved entirely upon him, he discharged them most faithfully, taking the greatest possible care of his young sister. Six months after, on going to church he meditated on the apostles who abandoned all earthly goods to follow Christ, and on the first Christians at Jerusalem who held their possessions in common.

By ordination of divine Providence, at Anthony's very entrance into the church, Christ's words to the youth were read: If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven,



and come and follow me. These words so pierced his heart that he hastened home as soon as the divine service had ended, distributed his estates among his neighbors, sold his movables, gave the money thereof to the poor, and only kept for his and his sister's support a small sum in reserve. Again being in church, and there hearing the words of the Son of God: "Take therefore no thought for the morrow," he immediately delivered up even the small remainder of his own portion, committed his sister to the care of virgins, living in holy community, and betook himself to a solitary abode near the village, to imitate the example of a pious old man, who had already been a hermit for many years. An interruption to this retirement only took place, when he visited other hermits, both to enkindle the flame of his own faith, hope, love and virtues by theirs and to learn to imitate their religious exercises and mortifications. The hermits, in return, loved Anthony because of his humility, and were more and more edified by him.

The saint at this time suffered grievously from various temptations of Satan, principally scruples concerning his manner of life, thoughts of pride, and was vehemently assailed by the temptation of lust.

Anthony, however, defeated his foes by fasting, vigils, prayer, meditations, and most of all, by labor, the wages of which he distributed to the poor.

After living in this manner for some time, St. Anthony penetrated into a deep wilderness, where he lived unknown to any human being, save one who brought him a scanty meal daily which he ate after sunset. He spent, not unfrequently, two or three days without eating, passed many nights in prayer, and the little repose he allowed himself was taken on the bare ground, or upon rushes.

By divine permission not even this self-denying life was free from the most violent temptations and cruel assaults of the malignant spirits; yet the saint feared nothing, God himself, who so graciously taught him, being his refuge and strength. One day weary of his solitude, Anthony said to God: "Behold, O Lord, I have a great desire to become a saint, yet my thoughts hinder me!" Immediately he heard the following words: "Step out of thy cavern and look!" Anthony did so, and saw a man, who sat laboring, and who rose afterwards and prayed. He again heard the same voice saying: "Imitate him, and thou also wilt be a saint!" At another time when after severe struggle with the infernal foes a bright ray of celestial light fell into his cavern, making the devils disappear, the saint asked the Lord: "Where wert Thou, O my Jesus, that



Thou didst not help sooner?" The Lord answered him affectionately: "I was with thee, Anthony, I witnessed thy struggle, I will never forsake thee!" From this day the saint felt encouraged to do every good work.

Anthony continued this mode of living for fifteen years, when at the age of twenty-eight, he left his cavern, and crossing the Nile, retired into the desert, where he chose a dilapidated castle for his abode. Nobody knew him here, except a pious hermit, who semi-annually provided him with a loaf of bread, which he threw over the wall, without either seeing or speaking to him. In this retreat the saint lived twenty years, labor, prayer, and the singing of psalms being his occupation. Finally, about the year 305, this abode becoming known to his former friends, they again flocked in great numbers to him, and unceasingly besought him to leave his miserable dwelling and live with them at Thebais, where they built the cloister Phaium.

St. Anthony yielded to their petition; and took care of his brethren most lovingly. His wisdom, clemency, example, and above all, the miracles through which by divine power he restored the sick to health, and expelled demons, brought crowds of disciples to his monastery. Like his divine Master he spent days and nights in meditation, prayer, and chanting pious hymns. The saint's food was now merely a small piece of bread, which he soaked in water and strewed with salt. Sometimes he added a little fruit, but then again, he often abstained, three or even four days from all food. It often happened when at table with his disciples that he wept, or went off without having tasted food, because he remembered the happiness of the blessed, who without need of food praise God for ever. Thus, St. Anthony's only joy was to lock himself up in his cell and devote himself to prayer and meditation. By no means, however, did he neglect to rule his large community with circumspection and fatherly love, infusing into the minds of his disciples those precious doctrines of Christian perfection, handed down to us by St. Athanasius, who was the bosom friend of our saint. Some of these inestimable doctrines may find a place here. First: "To a Christian nothing is more useful than to think every day: To-day I commence serving God and this very day is the last of my life. Secondly: There is no better remedy against a relaxation in fervor, than the continual remembrance of the shortness of this life and the uncertainty of death. Thirdly: Temptations are easily overcome by diffidence in our own strength, and confidence in God." Somebody once asked the saint: "What shall I do to please God?" To



whom he replied: Wheresoever thou shalt go, have God before thy eyes. Whatsoever thou shalt do, consult holy Scripture. If thou wilt act thus, thou wilt be saved." Yet, while caring for the salvation of others, Anthony did not forget his own soul. He devoted his spare time to prayer, weaving mats of rushes, or cultivating his garden. While thus working, the saint, however, was entirely occupied with God, his heart being so filled with divine love that he could say: I do not fear God so much as I love him. Nor did his life, which was all absorbed in God, hinder him from taking all possible interest in the welfare of the holy Church. As soon as he had heard of the Emperor Maximian's persecution against the Christians, he hastened to Alexandria, there to strengthen the Christians in the faith, and perhaps to obtain for himself the crown of martyrdom. He entered prisons and mines in search of Christians, encouraged them at the tribunals, forced himself through crowds of people and guards, accompanying the martyrs upon the scaffolds; nobody seized him though he publicly wore his hermit's garment. When the persecution was over, Anthony, who most sorrowfully regretted that his fervent desire to die for Christ's sake had not been realized, sadly returned into his solitude. The number of youths who entrusted themselves to the saint's direction increased steadily. There were already three monasteries under his guardianship; these were, as St. Athanasius says, so many temples and paradises in which no other voices resounded than those of God's praise and where nobody thought of aught else but prayer, spiritual reading, fasting, vigil, and labor in support of the poor.

The direction of so numerous a flock occasioned the saint too many distractions, which at last became insupportable to him. Therefore, he made his escape, and penetrated into a still deeper wilderness in search of a quiet and retired abode. After wandering three days he reached the mountain Kalzim, about 70 miles from the Red Sea; at the foot of this mountain, bubbled forth a most healthy spring under the shady leaves of a palm-tree. This then, was the spot where the saint erected three cells and thanked God for the quiet solitude. But the disciples in search of their master also discovered him here, he, however, did not permit them to build cells, and to fix their abodes in his neighborhood. Thus, at a distance of about twenty miles, a new monastery was erected, into which numbers of Christians took refuge to renounce the world, and enable them to serve God without reserve. Anthony often visited them; once every year he also visited the disciples of the



former monasteries. The saint now devoted the whole day to prayer, rising at midnight, and upon his knees, with hands stretched heavenwards, prayed until day-break, sometimes until three o'clock in the afternoon. Often, when the rising sun interfered with his mental recollection, Anthony exclaimed complainingly: "What have I to do with thee, O sun, why dost thou come to distract me?" Once, while absorbed in meditation, he saw the earth all covered with snares, nets, and traps, and Satan at work to catch mankind. Astonished at this terrible scene, St. Anthony cried out: "Who can escape there!" To which a voice replied: "Humility alone;" which means, everybody who distrusts himself, and does not wilfully expose himself to danger, flies the occasions of sin, and trusts only in God.

Though the saint was greatly attached to prayer, yet he never neglected manual labor. In the sweat of his brow he cultivated a small field that he might raise a little grain for his support. Adjacent to the field was a garden in which he planted vegetables, to serve his brethren that came to visit him. The mats he made were sold to support the poor.

Notwithstanding the saintly hermit fled the world, abhorred all praise, declined accepting any mark of honor, his extraordinary life surprised the world, and caused the Emperor Constantine and his son to recommend themselves to his prayers. In a letter to their majesties Anthony used the following remarkable words: "I praise you for your faith in Jesus Christ. Be not proud of your dignity, but be mindful of Jesus Christ, who will judge you." In closing the letter, our saint called the emperor's attention to his subjects, admonishing him to exercise clemency towards them, and to be merciful especially to the poor. When the sectarian Arius denied Christ to be true God, Anthony was called upon by the bishops. Without hesitation the holy man listened to the call, and came to Alexandria where he was cheerfully received, not only by the faithful but even by the unbelievers, who flocked from all sides to see and hear him. After he had testified to the true faith and confirmed his words by miracles, Anthony without any delay returned to his retreat. Shortly after, perceiving the end of his life approaching, he said to his disciples with a cheerful air: "I see the Lord ready to call me home. Be watchful, do not lose the fruit of the labors of so many years. Always follow Christ and confide in Him." He also exhorted the brethren to be mindful of their duty to shun all intercourse with those who had wilfully deserted the Church. To which he added: "First of all endeavor to



belong to the Lord, then be attached to the saints also, that as friends and relatives after death they may take you into the eternal mansions." St. Anthony's last words were: "Bring my clothes to the bishop Athanasius and Serapion, for yourselves keep my girdle. Farewell my children." With a bright countenance he embraced death as if it were a welcome friend; our great saint expired in the year 356 at the advanced age of 105 years.

The Introit of this day's Mass is as follows: The mouth of the just shall meditate wisdom, and his tongue shall speak judgment: the law of his God is in his heart. (*Ps. xxxvi.*) Be not emulous of evil doers: nor envy them that work iniquity. Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Let the intercession of the blessed abbot Anthony, we beseech Thee, O Lord, commend us unto Thee: that what by our own merits we are unworthy to receive, we may obtain by his patronage. Thro'. &c.

LESSON. (*Ecclus. xlv. 1—6.*) He was beloved of God and men, whose memory is in benediction. He made him like the saints in glory, and magnified him in the fear of his enemies, and with his words he appeased monsters. He glorified him in the sight of kings, and gave him commandments in the sight of his people, and showed him his glory. He sanctified him in his faith and meekness, and chose him out of all flesh. For he heard him, and his voice, and brought him into a cloud. And he gave him commandments before his face, and a law of life and instruction.

EXPLANATION. These words of the Holy Ghost refer to Moses, but the Church here justly applies them to St. Anthony, since he likewise was loved by God and man. His memory is ever blessed. God has exalted this most humble saint in order to terrify devils and unbelievers. His powerful words expelled the plagues that the wicked spirits inflicted on man. Before emperors and kings the Lord glorified him, and even vouchsafed at many times to converse with him, laying the words of prayer, divine love and holy discipline upon the saint's tongue, who was thus enabled to show to the many thousands that flocked to him, the way of salvation.



GOSPEL. (*Luke* xii. 35—40.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: Let your loins be girt, and lamps burning in your hands: and you yourselves like to men who wait for their lord, when he shall return from the wedding: that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching: amen I say to you, that he will gird himself and make them sit down to meat, and passing will minister unto them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. But this know ye, that if the householder did know at what hour the thief would come, he would surely watch, and would not suffer his house to be broken open. Be you, then, also ready: for at what hour you think not, the Son of man will come.

*What does the Redeemer mean by the words: Let your loins be girt, and lamps burning in your hands?*

He would say: we must continually be ready to serve God, and receive the Lord when at the end of our lives He comes for judgment; like the servants, in the East, who in order to work with greater ease gird their garments. Moreover, the Orientals gird their clothes when undertaking a journey, that they may walk easier and with greater speed. The burning lamps mean the three divine virtues Faith, Hope and Charity, and also good works, with which we must be adorned, when the Lord shall come to judge the world.

*Who are the watchful servants?*

Those Christians who often think of death, and by a true Christian life prepare themselves for it, have God continually before their eyes, and thus preserve themselves free from sin.

*What signifies the watch in which the Lord comes?*

The first watch signifies death, the second, judgment immediately after death, the third, universal judgment at the end of the world.



ASPIRATION. O dear saint Anthony, who by the power of the Cross hast victoriously overcome every temptation; help and assist me, that when the seducer approaches to incite me to do evil, I may also victoriously combat and triumph over him, and thus gain the crown of heaven. Amen.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. PETER'S CHAIR AT ROME.

[January 18. and February 22.]

*What festival is this?*



It is the festival by which the Church celebrates the anniversary of the day upon which St. Peter, as the Vicar of Christ, established his Episcopal See at Antioch in Syria, and seven years later, for himself and his successors, the Apostolic Chair at Rome, which he occupied for twenty-five years before his death. The Feast of St. Peter's Chair at Rome is celebrated by the Church on January 18th, that of the See at Antioch, on the 22nd of February.

*Why did St. Peter remove the Apostolic See to Rome?*

Because Rome was at that time, so to speak, the capital of the world, and the centre of all errors. Hence it was proper, as Pope St. Leo says, that this city should be made the centre and head of the true, Catholic religion, and that the light of faith be carried by the apostolic authority over the whole world, as error had been diffused over the whole world by the power of pagan Rome.

*What ought Catholics to do on this day?*

They should thank God that He founded the Roman, Catholic, Apostolic Church for them, and pray to Him for the supreme head of the Church, the Pope at Rome, that he may be given the grace to follow St. Peter in zeal for religion and the salvation of souls, as he follows him in the Apostolic See.

[The Introit of the Mass as on the Feast of St. Nicholas.]

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who, in delivering to Thy blessed Apostle Peter the keys





of the kingdom of heaven, didst confer on him the supreme power of binding and loosing: grant that, by the help of his intercession, we may be loosed from the bonds of our sins. Who livest &c.



EPISTLE. (*i Pet. i. 1—7.*) PETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers dispersed through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, unto the sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: grace unto you and peace be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy hath regenerated us unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that cannot fade, reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are kept by faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein you shall greatly rejoice, if now you must be for a little time made sorrowful in divers temptations: that the trial of your faith, much more precious than gold (which is tried by the fire), may be found unto praise, and glory, and honor, at the appearing of Jesus Christ our Lord.

EXPLANATION. This epistle may be regarded as a general pastoral letter which St. Peter, as Pope, addressed to all Christians, whom he looked upon as strangers in the world, but especially to those whom he had himself converted. He entreats them to give thanks to God for their redemption through Jesus Christ, and for His having called them to the faith, and the inheritance of heaven, which they should look upon as their true home, and which they must merit by overcoming all temptations if it should please God to send them.

GOSPEL. (*Matt. xvi. 13—19.*) AT THAT TIME, Jesus came into the quarters of Cesarea Philippi, and he asked his disciples, saying: Whom do men say that the Son of man is? But they said: Some, John the Baptist, and other some, Elias, and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. Jesus saith to them: But whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.



And Jesus answering, said to him: Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.

*Why does Christ, here and in other places, call himself the Son of man?*

From humility, and to teach us that He is not only the true Son of God, but also of man, and a descendant of Adam according to the flesh. Christ was necessarily man, because He was to suffer for the sins of the world, rendering satisfaction for them, and as God he could not suffer. We must, therefore, if we wish to be saved, believe that Christ is both true God and true man.

*Why was Peter the only one to answer the question: But whom do you say that I am?*

Because he, as St. Jerome says, was already appointed by God chief of the apostles and head of the whole Church, and here as well as after the resurrection he spoke in the name of all the apostles, who made his profession of faith theirs, as the faithful must do, if they wish to be saved.

*What is expressed by Peter's words: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God?*

That Christ is the true Messiah, promised by God, the Lord's Anointed, and the only-begotten Son of God from all eternity, who is life itself, and who gives life to all things.

Let us often profess openly that Christ is the Son of the living God; for this profession is the manifest sign of a true Christian, especially in our days, when impious free-thinkers deny the divinity of Christ seeking to degrade Him, our Redeemer, to the level of a common man. He who does not make St. Peter's confession his own is no member of the Church, no child of salvation, no heir to the kingdom of heaven!



*Whence did Peter receive the knowledge of Christ's divinity?*

Christ Himself says that Peter had received this knowledge by divine inspiration, and not from natural sources.

This is a proof that faith is a gift of God, a divine light, which enlightens man, by which he believes and professes that which God reveals.

*Why did Christ call St. Peter blessed?*

Because he firmly believed in the divinity of Christ, and to be blessed in this world consists in believing in Jesus and loving Him, as in the other world it consists in beholding and possessing Him. This, says St. John, (xvii. 3.) is eternal life: that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

These words: Blessed art thou, which Christ said to Peter, occasioned the Council at Ephesus to name St. Peter thrice blessed, from which came the custom of calling his successors, the popes, "Most Blessed Father" and later "Holy Father."

*What reward did St. Peter receive for his acknowledgment of Christ?*

Besides promising him eternal salvation, Christ gave him the preference and authority over the apostles, and announced to him, that on him, as on a rock, He would build His Church, against which hell with all its persecutions and heresies should never prevail.

See how wonderfully Christ's promise is fulfilled! More than eighteen centuries have passed away since the Saviour founded His Church upon the blessed Apostle Peter and his successors, the Roman popes; thousands of heresies have arisen since then from the pool of hell, all have raged with inexpressible fury against the Chair of St. Peter, and yet it stands at Rome unshaken, and in it, serene and unharmed, in all the power of his apostolic dignity, sits the Holy Father, the Head of the Church, the Successor of St. Peter. More than eighteen hundred years have passed away, kings and emperors, cities and nations, have arisen against the Church and her supreme Head; they have reddened their hands in the blood of popes, bishops, priests and the faithful, and rejoiced in the wild presumption to obliterate the Church and the holy See from the earth, and lo! the kings and emperors are dust, the nations have disappeared, whereas the Church stands yet! No stone is broken in that glorious edifice which Christ founded on Peter and his successors, and from the mouth of the holy



Father there sounds over the whole earth that same great answer: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, and millions repeat it after him, praising him as blessed, because they are thus united with Peter as members of Christ's body, and in the faithful observance of Christ's holy doctrine have part in the glory of His heavenly kingdom. Hold, then, firm and fast to the holy Roman Catholic Church and her Head the Pope at Rome, and be not deceived and ruined by the paltry talk of light and progress, which has allured many from the true living faith and true Catholic love. Be not cut off from the true living vine by those who endeavor to deprive you of the shining light of true liberty and progress, which are found only in the Church which to-day and yesterday is ever the same; which teaches no other liberty, and knows no other progress, than freedom from the yoke of sin by mortification and self-denial, and the continual advancement in virtue and sanctity towards Him who has promised eternal life and indescribable reward to all those who faithfully persevere in faith in Him and His holy Church.

*Is Peter really the rock of the Church?*

Yes; for Christ said to Peter: Thou art Peter, that is a rock, and upon this rock I will build my Church. Peter and his successors, the popes, have always been the visible, personal rock, who by their faith have saved the Church from the attacks of hell, from false and sacrilegious doctrines. For this reason the principal attacks of all heretics have always been and are now directed against the successors of St. Peter, the Popes at Rome, because it is well known, that if the corner-stone, the foundation of the Church, is destroyed, the Church itself falls. But Christ has promised that the powers of hell, which endeavor to pervert faith and virtue into error and vice, shall not prevail against her.

*What is meant by the keys of the kingdom of heaven?*

The keys were and are still a sign of the highest power and authority with which a person can be entrusted. (*Isai.* xxii. 22.) In the East, even now, the giving of keys signifies full power to reign or command, and by giving up the keys of a city to a king or a general we understand that the city is surrendered to him. The words of Jesus: and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven cannot mean, as the heretics assert, that Peter was to open the doors of Christianity to the Jews and pagans, and convert them to the true faith,



but that Peter has the chief legislative and judicial power in the Church of Christ.

*What is meant by binding and loosing?*

Binding and loosing, in the first place, means, according to Isaias, (xxii. 22.) to open and close the kingdom of heaven, that is, to receive into, or reject from, the Catholic Church founded by Christ; in the next place, to remit or retain sin and its punishment; to impose penances upon sinners, to moderate or remit the punishment (by granting indulgences); to excommunicate or place under ban, that is, to exclude from the Church, and from the means of salvation the faithless, impious, &c.; to make or recall certain commandments and prohibitions; to make laws of punishment; to settle dogmas and to require their acceptance by the faithful; in a word, to order all that is necessary for the preservation of unity in the faith, and for the external discipline of the Church.

*Was not the power to bind and to loose given to the rest of the apostles?*

Yes; (*Matt.* xviii. 18; *John* xx. 23.) but it does not follow from this, as asserted by heretics, that Christ did not intend to distinguish St. Peter above the rest of the apostles, and to promise to make him the chief pastor; for at the time when Christ gave the apostles power to bind and to loose, St. Peter was with them, but in this case they were not with St. Peter; Christ speaks to St. Peter alone, and gives to him only, and in a solemn manner the chief guard of the keys, thus showing the other apostles that they should practice their power only in union with him. St. Cyprian writes thus on this subject: "Although Christ after His resurrection gave to all His apostles equal power, He built His Church on one, and for unity established a chair of doctrine, and so ordered it thus in virtue of His authority, that this unity should originate with one."

SUPPLICATION. O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God! who didst found Thy Church on St. Peter as on a rock, and didst entrust him with the keys of the kingdom of heaven, placing him and his successors as chief pastors of the Church and its earthly government, grant us Thy grace, that we may obey all their directions as we obey Thee, and that



we may be, like St. Peter, immovable rocks in all good things.

## INSTRUCTION CONCERNING THE PAPACY.

*Whom do we Catholics understand by the pope?*

**T**HE general and visible head of the Church of Christ, the Bishop of Rome.

*Did St. Peter conduct himself as head of the Church?*

Yes, for after the resurrection of our Lord, he showed himself always as head in all ecclesiastical affairs, for which reason St. Chrysostom calls him "the mouth-piece of the apostles, the prince and head of that group." Thus he presided over the election which resulted in Mathias' being chosen to the place among the apostles made vacant by the treason of Judas; (*Acts* i. 25—26) he presided at, and opened the first general council at Jerusalem, with him the whole assembly afterwards agreed, (*Acts* xv. 7. 12.) and in the gospels, if occasionally there is a difference made among the apostles, St. Peter is always placed first; (*Luke* vi. 14.) St. Matthew says: The first: Simon who is called Peter, (*Matt.* x. 2.) since Peter was by no means first according to calling, it is evident that according to position the other apostles acknowledged him as their head.

*Did not this chief pastorship of St. Peter end with his death?*

No, it did not end then and could not, because by Christ's unfailing promise the Church continues, and will continue unto the end of the world, and to retain unity in matters of faith and morals there must be a central point, which is and can be no other than the successor of St. Peter, the Bishop of Rome, in which city St. Peter governed the Church of Christ for twenty-five years, there he died the glorious death of a martyr, and there he lies buried, as impartial history testifies. The Bishops of Rome have, therefore, ever since held this supreme pastorship over the whole Church, without there having ever been a well grounded objection to their doing so; the Roman Pontiffs as head of the Church have not only received the homage of single bishops, but also of whole general councils, and have been given the highest titles, as, for instance, St. Irenaeus calls the Bishop of Rome the "Bishop of Bishops," and the Council of Chalcedon the "Prince of Bishops." The union with the Bishop of Rome in matters of faith and



morals, has always been regarded as the badge of a true Christian, and on account of this union with the Roman Pontiff, we call ourselves Roman Catholics; no one can make us ashamed of the title, for even the great Father of the Church, St. Jerome, writes: "I meanwhile declare aloud: Who holds to the faith of St. Peter's Chair, he is mine." Remain ever firm to this centre of unity, St. Peter's Chair; for "how can he regard himself," writes St. Cyprian, "as a member of the Church, who abandons the Chair of St. Peter, on which the Church is founded?"

*Who is a bishop?*

A bishop is a successor of the apostles, who, in union with the Pope, is called upon to rule and guide the Church, and is usually placed at the head of a diocese.

*Whom do we understand by archbishops, primates, and patriarchs?*

The archbishops are, like the bishops, rulers of dioceses, but have besides the supervision of a number of bishops, and of dioceses lying near their own; these episcopates taken together are called a Church Province. A primate is the bishop of the first and most important diocese in the country, the name may be simply an honorary title, or the primate may have, as the pope's representative, an actual authority and jurisdiction. A patriarch is a bishop under whose direction and spiritual authority are placed all the bishops and archbishops of several provinces, or even nations.

## ON EXCOMMUNICATION.

**F**ROM the authority to bind and to loose, expressly given by Christ to St. Peter and to his successors, the popes, and in the same manner to the other apostles and their successors, the bishops, (*Matt. xviii. 18.*) the pope has the right and the power for the whole Church, and the bishop for his diocese, not only to give or refuse absolution to sinners, but to impose punishment for grievous crimes, when sinners stubbornly persist in their sins.

The most severe of these punishments, and the most terrible in its consequences is Excommunication.

Excommunication is a spiritual punishment of the Church, by which a Christian, on account of some great sin, is shut out from the membership of the Church, and wholly or in part deprived of the spiritual graces flowing therefrom.

Excommunication is of two kinds, the greater and the lesser.



He who is under the greater ban from the pope or bishop, has no longer the right to receive the Sacraments, is excluded from the community of the faithful, has no further share in the good works and merits of the just, or in the public prayers of the Church, and cannot gain an indulgence. Only on one day of the year, namely, Good Friday, does the Church publicly pray for these unhappy ones, that they may repent. Finally, such a person is not permitted to be present at the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and the other services of the Church, but is allowed to be present at Christian instruction.

The lesser ban prevents him who comes under it, from receiving the Sacraments, but not from attending Church and divine service.

Excommunication is not only a punishment, but a remedy, for as soon as an excommunicated person repents, the Church receives him again into her communion with great joy, and absolves him from the continuance of the punishment. As excommunication is the severest of punishments, it can be pronounced only on account of great crimes, and only after many repeated admonitions to reform. The Catholic Church conducts herself in this regard as a good, careful mother, who warns and exhorts her children, and, at last, when nothing else avails, inflicts punishment, but only in order to bring the stubborn children to reflection and to an acknowledgment of having done wrong as also that they may reform. The Church has therefore the right which Christ expressly gave her, (*Matt. xviii. 15-18.*) and of which the apostles themselves made use, as did St. Paul in the case of the incestuous person at Corinth. (*i Cor. v. 5.*) Besides, the Church as a visible organization has the right to exclude rebellious and stubborn members from the advantages of its community. If the Church had not this right, and the power to execute it, she would have to give herself up to be divided and destroyed, as is the case with Protestantism. He who loves and obeys the commandments of God, and the directions of the Church in matters of faith and morals has nothing to fear, for excommunication is only used in punishment for great crimes.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. SEBASTIAN, MARTYR.

*[January 20.]*

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**S**T. SEBASTIAN was born of Christian parents, and was brought up in Narbonne, a city in the South of France. On account of his remarkable talents and irreproachable conduct, the Emperor Dioclesian appointed him captain of the first legion of his body-guard. The saint while in this high position made use of his power in relieving the poor and assisting the Christians, particularly those who were in prison. He would visit, aid, console and encourage them to persevere firmly in the faith, and to suffer and die for Christ. By his ardent zeal he even effected the conversion of many pagans, among whom was the Judge Cromatius, who with his whole family and fourteen hundred slaves, whom he liberated, received baptism, renounced his position, and withdrew to his country seat. When Fabian, the successor in office of Cromatius, heard this, he sent for St. Sebastian, and reproached him for the crime of having converted Romans, under his command, to the Christian faith. The saint replied: "I believe I can do the state no greater service; for the more faithfully they serve Christ, the more faithfully they will serve their temporal master." When the emperor was informed of this he became enraged and ordered his soldiers to bind Sebastian to a post and shoot him with arrows. The sentence was carried out; the soldiers, believing they had killed the saint, left him; but a Christian widow, named Irene, who went in the night to bury him, found him still living, and at once had him brought in secret to her house, where his wounds soon healed. In his eager desire to become a martyr, he could not be withheld from going to the emperor, to whom he said: "Sir, can it be possible you still listen to slander against the Christians? I come to you once more to assure you that you have not in your whole country more useful and more faithful subjects than the Christians, who pray for the welfare of the whole nation." When Dioclesian saw that Sebastian still lived, he was greatly surprised and exclaimed: "What! are you still alive?" "Yes," replied the saint, "the Lord has preserved my life, that I may tell you how impious you are in persecuting the Christians." The



emperor, incensed beyond measure, ordered him to be scourged to death, and thus St. Sebastian received a martyr's crown on the 10th of January, 288. The pagans threw his body into a sewer, where, hanging on a hook, it was found by Lucina, a woman of great virtue, who caused it to be taken out, and had him buried at the entrance of the cemetery, which is to this day called the Catacomb of St. Sebastian.

### EXPRESSIONS OF ST. SEBASTIAN.

**H**E who enjoys every pleasure in this life which so quickly passes away, will lose all pleasure in that life which never ends.

The Christian fears not the sufferings of this life, for he knows that with them he purchases eternal happiness, and that for every passing pain he receives an eternal joy. Let us not fear to suffer an hour's pain in our body, who seek to enjoy ourselves forever with Christ.

The Introit of the Mass reads: Let the sighing of the prisoners come in before Thee, O Lord: render to our neighbors sevenfold in their bosom: revenge the blood of Thy saints which hath been shed. O God, the heathens are come to Thy inheritance: they have defiled Thy holy temple: they have made Jerusalem as a place to keep fruit. (*Ps. lxxviii.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O almighty God, look down upon our infirmity: and because the weight of our deeds oppresses us, let the glorious intercession of Thy blessed martyr Sebastian be our protection. Thro'. &c.

EPISTLE. (*Heb. xi. 33—39.*) BRETHREN, the saints by faith conquered kingdoms,<sup>1</sup> wrought justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,<sup>2</sup> quenched the violence of fire,<sup>3</sup> escaped the edge of the sword,<sup>4</sup> recovered strength from weakness, became valiant in battle, put to flight the armies of foreigners: women received their dead raised to life again.<sup>5</sup> But others were racked, not accepting deliverance that they might

<sup>1</sup> Gideon and David. — <sup>2</sup> As Samson, David, Daniel. — <sup>3</sup> The three children in the fiery furnace. — <sup>4</sup> Elias, David. — <sup>5</sup> The widow of Sarepta, who through Elias received her son.



find a better resurrection.<sup>1</sup> And others had trial of mockeries and stripes, moreover also of bands and prisons: they were stoned, they were cut asunder, they were tempted, they were put to death by the sword, they wandered about in sheepskins, and in goatskins, being in want, distressed, afflicted: of whom the world was not worthy; wandering in deserts, in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth. And all these being approved by the testimony of faith, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

EXPLANATION. The apostle shows by many examples from history, especially from the Old Testament, the virtue there is in a living faith, and what strength it gives its confessors to endure the greatest tortures.

In our days where do we find such living faith? For fear of a little mockery or the petty scorn of so-called enlightened Christians, who have abandoned the practice of their religion, even Catholics, otherwise faithful and pious, often omit the practice and public profession of their faith. To such will one day be made good the words of our Lord: He that shall deny me before men, I will also deny him before my Father who is in heaven. (*Matt. x. 33.*)

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE.

[January 25.]

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THE history of this conversion is given fully in this day's Lesson, taken from the Acts of the Apostles.

The Introit of the Mass is as follows: I know whom I have believed, and I am certain that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him, against that day, being a just judge. (ii *Tim. i. 12.*) Lord, Thou hast proved me and known me: Thou hast known my sitting down and my rising up. (*Ps. cxxxviii.*) Glory be to the Father, &c. — This Introit shows how valuable

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<sup>1</sup> The Machabees.



good works are in the eyes of God, since He so faithfully preserves them for reward.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who didst teach the whole world by the preaching of the blessed Paul the apostle: mercifully grant that we who this day celebrate the memory of his conversion may, by following his example, advance in the way that leadeth unto Thee. Thro'. &c.

LESSON. (*Acts ix. 1—22.*) IN THOSE DAYS, Saul, as yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high-priest, and asked of him letters to Damascus, to the synagogues, that if he found any men and women of this way, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. And as he went on his journey, it came to pass that he drew nigh to Damascus: and suddenly a light from heaven shined round about him. And falling on the ground he heard a voice saying to him: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Who said: Who art thou, Lord? And he said: I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the goad. And he, trembling and astonished, said: Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said to him: Arise and go into the city, and there it shall be told thee what thou must do. Now the men who went in company with him stood amazed, hearing indeed a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. But they, leading him by the hand, brought him to Damascus. And he was there three days without sight, and he did neither eat nor drink. Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias: and the Lord said to him in a vision: Ananias. And he said: Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said to him: Arise, and go into the street that is called Strait, and seek in the house of Judas one named Saul of Tar-



sus: for behold, he prayeth. (And he saw a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hands upon him, that he might recover his sight.) But Ananias answered: Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints in Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that invoke thy name. And the Lord said to him: Go thy way, for this man is to me a vessel of election, to carry my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house, and laying his hands upon him, he said: Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus hath sent me, he that appeared to thee in the way as thou camest, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight: and rising up, he was baptized. And when he had taken meat, he was strengthened. And he was with the disciples that were at Damascus for some days. And immediately he preached Jesus in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. And all that heard him were astonished, and said: Is not this he who persecuted in Jerusalem those who called upon this name: and came hither for that intent, that he might carry them bound to the chief priests? But Saul increased much more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt at Damascus, affirming that this is the Christ.

*What are we taught by this history?*

That we should not despise any sinner, nor despair of his salvation; for the greatest sinner may be at once converted by the grace of God, and even become a great saint, like St. Paul, who, while he was seeking to exterminate the Christians, became a chosen instrument in the hands of God for the instruction of the people; that we should fervently pray for the conversion of sinners, as St. Stephen prayed for Saul. His prayer won for Paul



the grace of conversion. (*Acts* vii. 57—59.) To pray for the conversion of sinners, is to make fruitful for them the sufferings of Christ, coöperating with those sufferings, that the heartfelt wish of our Saviour who came into this world to save sinners, and who still intercedes for them in heaven, may be realized.\*

Let us learn from this how we should conduct ourselves after our conversion. Paul at his conversion became physically blind, but spiritually so enlightened that he immediately exclaimed: Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? He then, by God's direction, took Ananias as his guide in the way of salvation, and he afterwards spoke as much for the honor of Christ as he had previously persecuted the faithful. In the same manner a convert should close his eyes to everything which has led him to do wrong and look only at that which God requires from him; he should furthermore entrust himself to an experienced spiritual director, following his instructions in all things; finally, he must now devote himself as fervently to the honor of God and the practice of virtue as he was previously attached to the world, the flesh and everything evil, and never permit himself to be turned from the right way, either by persecution or by mockery.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xix. 27—29.) AT THAT TIME, Peter said to Jesus: Behold, we have left all things, and have followed thee: what, therefore, shall we have? And Jesus said to them: Amen I say to you, that you who have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the seat of his majesty, you also shall sit on twelve seats judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall possess life everlasting.

*Why is this gospel read to-day?*

Because St. Paul was called by Christ Himself to the apostleship, although he was not one of His disciples while

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\* In the year 1836 there arose in the most remarkable manner in Paris the Confraternity of the Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary, having for its object to obtain the Blessed Virgin's intercession for the conversion of sinners. What a grand and meritorious object! You, too, O Christian, should hasten to join this confraternity, that, in union with its millions of members, you may by fervent, humble prayer, do something towards the conversion of sinners and unbelievers, and thereby acquire grace for your own soul.



Christ was still on earth. But he after his conversion, like the other apostles, left everything to follow Christ, and labored and endured even more than the others in the propagation of the gospel. He will, with the rest of the apostles, come with Christ, to judge not only the world, but even the fallen angels. He is, therefore, venerated by the Church in connection with St. Peter, as a prince of the apostles.

*How did Peter and the other apostles leave much, since they had but little to leave?*

St. Gregory gives the following explanation: "We must consider the inclination and love for a thing more than the value of the thing itself." Although Peter possessed but little, he gave up all inclination for that little and, therefore, he left much; for St. Bernard says: "He leaves much who yields up the will to possess." This St. Peter did. But he who leaves honors and riches and everything for God, and yet retains the desire for them, gives up but little and has no merit in the abnegation. So likewise every one of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth, that is, all affection for it, cannot be my disciple. (*Luke xiv. 33.*)

*Why did Peter ask a reward?*

This may have been done out of self-interest (for the apostles were not yet free from every imperfection), but Christ permitted the question, and made it the occasion to announce the reward which would be given to those who sincerely follow Him.

*Why did Christ promise the apostles that they should sit in judgment with Him?*

To encourage them to perseverance in following Him, and in bravely bearing disgrace and persecution from the world; to let it be known to them and to all who adhere to Christ in poverty and humiliation, what exaltation will be given them at the end of the world; to show the followers of this world who regard Christ's adherents as most foolish, the folly and madness of their judgment, for which they themselves will be condemned.

*Why does Christ, since he commands us to love our parents and relations, promise us a reward for leaving them?*

This does not interfere with the command to love them in so far as they are our parents, but, as St. Gregory says,



only in so far as they are no obstacles in the way to God and our salvation; we must shun and avoid them, that is, we are not required to obey them, if they advise or command us to do anything which is contrary to God's commandments or injurious to our salvation.

*What is understood by the hundredfold which Christ promises to those who leave all temporal possessions?*

According to St. Jerome this hundredfold signifies spiritual benefits, the grace of God, virtue, interior consolation and satisfaction which are a hundredfold, that is, infinitely more valuable than temporal riches. O how small and trivial is that which we leave for the love of God, and of which death would, in any event, deprive us! How indescribably great are the treasures which God in this life and in the next gives in return! Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him. (i Cor. ii. 9.)

SUPPLICATION TO ST. PAUL. O St. Paul, great Apostle, whom the voice of the Lord cast to the ground, that thou mightest arise to true penance, and who thus from being a vessel of dishonor became a vessel of election, from being the enemy of Christ was changed into His most faithful defender and friend, I beseech thee to ask the grace from Christ for me, that I may now rightly know and love Him whose enemy I have been, and by my sins have crucified; that I may follow Him, and according to thy example as zealously practice justice as I have hitherto practiced malice, so that I may obtain salvation with thee. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, &c. Amen.





## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS OF SALES.

[January 29.]

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HIS great saint was born at Sales, three leagues from Annecy. His parents were Francis of Sales and Frances of Sionas. Before his birth his pious mother offered her child to God, begging He would preserve it from the corruption of this world, and rather deprive her of the comfort of seeing herself a mother than suffer her to give birth to a child who should ever become His enemy by sin. Her first care was to inspire him with the most profound respect for the Church and all holy things; and she had the consolation of seeing in him a recollection and devotion at his prayers far above his age. She often repeated to him those words of Queen Blanche of Castile to her son St. Louis ix., king of France: "I had rather see you dead, than hear you had committed one mortal sin." The young Francis was very beautiful, and the sweetness of his countenance won the affection of all who saw him; but the meekness of his temper, the pregnancy of his wit, his modesty, tractableness and obedience were far more valuable qualifications. He showed an early inclination for the ecclesiastical state, and with great difficulty obtained his father's consent to receive the tonsure in the year 1578, and the eleventh of his age. He afterwards entered the school of the Jesuits in Paris, and went through rhetoric and philosophy with great applause; he also acquired a knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew languages. But his principal concern was a regular course of piety, by which he labored to sanctify himself and all his actions. His chief resort, during his stay at Paris, was to some churches, that especially of St. Stephen des Grez, as being one of the most retired. Here he made a vow of perpetual chastity, putting himself under the special patronage of the Blessed Virgin. God to purify his heart permitted a dense darkness to overspread his mind, and a spiritual dryness and melancholy to overwhelm him. He seemed, from a perfect tranquillity and peace of mind, to be almost brought to the brink of despair. Seized with the greatest terror, he passed days and nights in tears and lamentations, and suffered more than can be conceived by those who have never felt the severity of such interior con-



flicts. His pious preceptor endeavored in vain to discover the cause of these troubles, and to suggest a remedy. At last Francis, being at prayer in the same church of St. Stephen, cast his eyes on a picture of our Blessed Lady, and, prostrating himself on the ground as unworthy to address the Father of all consolation, he begged that she would be his advocate, and procure him the grace to love God with his whole heart. That very moment he found himself eased of his grief as of a heavy weight taken from his heart, and his former peace and tranquillity restored, which he ever after enjoyed. He was eighteen years old when his father recalled him from Paris, and sent him to Padua to study law; here two years later he received the degrees of doctor with great applause and pomp, in the presence of forty-eight doctors. His father wished him to form a very favorable alliance, and obtained in his behalf from the duke of Savoy, documents creating him councillor of the parliament of Chamberry. Francis modestly, but firmly, refused both; yet dared not propose to his parents his design of receiving holy orders. He had recourse to his cousin, Lewis of Sales, a priest and canon of Geneva, who obtained the consent of his parents, but not without the greatest difficulty. He was appointed by the Pope to the provostship of the Church of Geneva, then vacant. He delivered the word of God with a mixture of majesty and modesty; his first sermons gained him an extraordinary reputation, and were accompanied with incredible success. His piety, his charity to the poor, his disinterestedness, his care of the sick and those in prison, endeared him to all.

He was naturally of a hasty and passionate temper, but by studying in the school of a God who was meek and humble of heart, he learned that important lesson to such perfection, as to convert his predominant passion into his characteristic virtue. The Calvinists ascribed principally to his meekness the wonderful conversions he made amongst them. St. Francis converted no less than seventy-two thousand of them. In 1599 he was raised to the episcopate of Geneva. Immediately after his consecration he performed the visitation of his diocese, reformed several monasteries and corrected many abuses. St. Francis instituted the Order of the Visitation, designing it to be such, that all, even the sickly and weak might be admitted into it. Humility, piety, charity, meekness and simplicity were to be the necessary requirements of its members.

In the year 1622 having received an order from the duke of Savoy to confer at Avignon with Louis XIII. who had just finished the civil wars in Languedoc, he



took leave of his friends, saying he should never see them again. He was received by the king, queen-mother, and all the princes at Avignon with the greatest marks of honor and esteem. Though indisposed he performed all his functions on Christmas-day and St. John's in the morning. After dinner he began to fall gradually into apoplexy and happily expired on the 28th of December, in the year 1622, the fifty-sixth of his age, and the twentieth of his episcopacy. His body was embalmed and laid near the high altar in the church of the monastery of the visitation at Annecy. Innumerable miracles have been wrought by his intercession.

The spirit of ardor, authority, sagacity and power to lead, with a strong love for his crucified Lord, are the chief characteristics of St. Francis. In him as in St. Paul, we see untiring activity, burning zeal and wonderful tact, eloquence and defiance of opposition and persecution, and like this great apostle he became all to all for the salvation of souls. To St. Francis was given the peculiar commission of making felt the sweetness of charity, and leading men to salvation by this path, rather than by that of austerity and penance.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who didst wish blessed Francis, Thy confessor and bishop, to become all things to all for the salvation of souls: grant propitiously that, imbued with the sweetness of Thy charity, we may, directed by his counsels and aided by his merits, attain eternal joys. Thro'. &c.

*Epistle and Explanation see Feast of St. Martin.  
(November 11.)*

*Gospel and Explanation see Feast of St. Patrick.  
(March 17.)*





## INSTRUCTION ON THE FESTIVAL OF ST. BRIDGET, VIRGIN.

ABBESS, AND PATRONESS OF IRELAND.

[February 1.]



**S**T. BRIDGET was born at Fochard, in Ulster, soon after Ireland had been blessed with the light of the faith. It was about the year 453 that she saw for the first time the light of this world. Her parents, Dubtach and Bronchessa, were both Christians. By her father she was lineally descended from "Con of the Hundred Battles," and her mother, Bronchessa, was descended from the noble house of the O'Connors.

Bridget spent her early years in Connaught, and was reared by a nurse who fortunately for her, was a Christian. She grew up beautiful in appearance, but still more so in her heavenly virtues, her meekness, humility and sweetness of manner. Her mother and her nurse carefully instructed her in the Christian religion, and deeply impressed upon her young mind the goodness and mercy of Jesus, and the loving tenderness of His holy mother Mary. And when told not to offend Jesus or Mary, with childlike simplicity she would ask how she could please them, and when told, would reply that she would never do anything to offend them. Thus were the purest impressions made on her infant mind, and as she grew in years, she became rich in all the Christian virtues.

Bridget, even when a child, accustomed herself to prayer and pious works, and loved to retire in solitude to commune with God. She was exceedingly modest, and the least delicacy of word or action hurt her tender soul very deeply. No wonder she was admired and loved by everybody.

Our saint was never more happy then when she found ways and means to assist the sick and the poor. Her charity knew no bounds. One time when visiting the sick neighbors, (she was then only nine years of age) it happened that she had nothing to relieve the wants of the needy; so she gave them the jewels from a precious sword which the king of Leinster had given her father, as a token of his good will and liking for his valiant service. The king heard of this and was angry, and shortly afterward came to a banquet in her father's house, and calling the little







maid he asked her how she dared to deface the gift of a king in such a manner as she had done the gift to her father. She fearlessly replied that she had given the jewels to a better king than he was, "whom," she continued, "finding in such extremities, I would have given all that my father has, and all that you have, yea, yourself too and all you have, were it in my power to give them, rather than Christ or His children, the poor, should starve." The king was so touched with her answer that he said to her father that his whole possessions would not be an equivalent for his daughter; and that he should let her have her own way in future, and not restrain the extraordinary graces God had conferred on her. He then gave Dubtach another sword more valuable than the former, as a mark of the esteem he entertained for him and his daughter.

When Bridget approached maturity, her father wished that she should wed a certain young man. Our saint was astonished at such a proposal, and firmly refused, and told her father that she was resolved to consecrate her virginity to God. All her relations opposed this resolution for a long time, but seeing that Bridget was determined they finally consented, and allowed her to choose her state of life. She made known her intention to several pious virgins, all of whom resolved to accompany her. Bishop Mel, nephew and disciple of St. Patrick, gave her the veil. It is said that she made her vows in the sixteenth year of her age.

Bridget's first community was established at Bridget's-Town or Ballyboy, near Ussna Hill. Her community soon became celebrated for its piety and charity. The poor flocked around her, and even the sick came from afar to be cured by St. Bridget's prayers. Several bishops requested her to establish communities in their dioceses. She visited Munster and established several convents there. While there she cured by her prayers a man who had been blind for years. Then she passed into the county Waterford, and established in the neighborhood of the present village of Tramore a community of nuns. We next find her in the county of Limerick establishing convents.

Society in Ireland in pagan times was divided into freemen and slaves; the former regarded the latter as beings of an inferior order, and treated them as mere chattels, as is the case in all slave countries even in our own times. The Catholic Church endeavored from the beginning to abolish this barbarous custom, and finally succeeded. St. Bridget labored hard to obtain the freedom of poor culprits, or at least to mitigate the bitterness of their captivity.



Her numerous miracles and the respect and veneration entertained for her, gave power to her influence, which seldom failed in gaining the boon of mercy. St. Bridget was great in miracles, great in Christian charity. She shares with St. Patrick the glory and sanctity of being the first to bring the pious young virgins of Ireland into conventual communities. Her success in this holy work was wonderful, for soon religious establishments of the kind extended over all the land. Thus she aided powerfully the work of St. Patrick in christianizing the inhabitants of Ireland. No wonder that after her death many churches were dedicated to God under her name. A portion of her relics was kept with great veneration in a monastery of regular canons at Aburnethi, once the capital of the kingdom of the Picts. Her body was found with those of SS. Patrick and Columba, in a triple vault in Down-Patrick, in 1185. The head of St. Bridget is now kept in the church of the Jesuits at Lisbon.

The Introit of the Mass reads: Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the King. (*Ps. xliv.*) Glory be &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Graciously hear us, O God of our salvation: that, as we rejoice in the festivity of the blessed Bridget, Thy virgin, we may be instructed in the affection of a loving devotion. Thro' &c.

LESSON. (*ii Cor. x. 17-xi. 1, 2.*) BRETHREN, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved; but he whom God commendeth. Would to God you could bear with some little of my folly; but do bear with me. For I am jealous of you with the jealousy of God. For I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

EXPLANATION. The Apostle exhorts the Corinthians to avoid all self-praise and vain glory. To acknowledge our merits, however, is not wrong, provided we attribute such merits to the grace of God, giving all honor to Him, who works the good in us. Self-praise is no proof that



we are faithful servants of God; we are no more than what we are in the eyes of God. St. Paul indeed endeavors to draw the attention of the Corinthians to his dignity and merits, but does it to honor God, and to save for Christ those whom he had by their conversion to Christianity brought to Christ as a spouse to her bridegroom; he speaks of his dignity, and is jealous to oppose the heretics who tried to lessen his influence by decrying his merits, and who endeavored to make the Christians abandon the true faith. When self-praise proceeds from a motive of honoring God and saving the souls of our neighbors it is allowable.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxv. 1—13.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke to his disciples this parable: The kingdom of heaven shall be like to ten virgins, who, taking their lamps, went out to meet the bridegroom and the bride. And five of them were foolish, and five wise: but the five foolish, having taken their lamps, did not take oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with the lamps. And the bridegroom tarrying, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made: Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise: Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out. The wise answered, saying: Lest perhaps there be not enough for us and for you, go you rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. Now whilst they went to buy, the bridegroom came: and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. But at last came also the other virgins, saying: Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answering, said: Amen, I say to you, I know you not. Watch ye, therefore, because you know not the day nor the hour.

*Who is the bridegroom?*

Christ the Lord who has united Himself to His Church, and enters into an intimate union with every soul of the faithful who keeps His commandments.



*Why is the kingdom of heaven compared to virgins?*

Because virginity is similar to the integrity of holy faith. Only those who preserve the faith inviolate will enter the kingdom of heaven.

*Why does Christ make mention of "ten" virgins?*

The number ten was in ancient times made use of to express a whole. Here according to SS. Jerome and Ambrose all the faithful are to be understood. This is evident from the words of Christ who says of the virgins that they had lamps. The lamp signifies the light of faith. This holy faith is infused into the soul in baptism.

*Who are the wise, and who the foolish virgins?*

The wise are all those of the faithful who not only believe in the doctrine of Christ, but also live according to the faith, performing good works; the foolish are those Christians who have indeed the true faith, but not the works according to the faith.

*What is understood by the oil?*

It means good works, especially works of charity. Without good works our faith does not shine forth, is, therefore, not burning light, but dead as St. James says: "Faith without works is dead."

*What mean the vessels that contain the oil?*

Our conscience which is the seat and receptacle of good works.

*What does His coming at midnight signify?*

It signifies the time when we least expect; for who would suppose the coming of the bridegroom at that unexpected hour when every one is asleep! Let us, therefore, be careful that we are not wanting in faith and good works, let us take warning also from the words of Christ to be ever ready, as we know not the day nor the hour when we shall be called upon to appear before our Judge.





INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF THE  
PURIFICATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN  
MARY,  
COMMONLY CALLED CANDLEMAS-DAY.

[February 2.]



*What is this festival?*

It is the festival on which the Church venerates the humility and obedience of Mary who, though not subject to the law of Moses, which required purification and presentation in the temple, yet subjected herself to it. From this comes the name Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or the Presentation of Jesus in the temple. It is also called Candlemas, because before Mass on this day the candles used in divine service are blessed and carried in procession.

*Why are the candles blessed on this day and carried in procession?*

In remembrance of the presentation of Jesus to His Heavenly Father on this day, when the aged Simeon called Him: A light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of the people of Israel, (*Luke ii. 32.*) and to remind us that, like the five wise virgins, we should go to meet Christ with the light of faith and good works.

*With what intention are candles blessed?*

With the intention of obtaining from God by their pious use and the prayers of those who devoutly carry them, health of body and soul; that our hearts, through the doctrine of Jesus and the grace of the Holy Ghost, may be interiorly enlightened; and that the fire of the love of God may be kindled in our hearts, purify them from all remains of sin, and make us partakers in the joyous light of heaven, which will never be extinguished.

The Introit of the Mass is: We have received Thy mercy, O God, in the midst of Thy temple: according to Thy name, O God, so also is Thy praise, unto the ends of the earth: Thy right hand is full of justice. Great is the Lord, and exceedingly to be praised: in the city of our God, in His holy mountain. (*Ps. xlvii.*) Glory &c.



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Almighty, everliving God, we humbly beseech Thy Majesty, that as Thine only-begotten Son was this day presented in the temple in the substance of our flesh; so we also may, with purified hearts, be presented unto Thee. Thro'. &c.

LESSON. (*Malach. iii. 1—4.*) THUS SAITH THE LORD GOD: Behold, I send my Angel, and he shall prepare the way before my face. And presently the Lord, whom you seek, and the Angel of the testament, whom you desire, shall come to his temple. Behold, he cometh, saith the Lord of hosts, and who shall be able to think of the day of his coming, and who shall stand to see him? For he is like a refining fire, and like the fuller's herb: and he shall sit refining and cleansing the silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and shall refine them as gold and as silver: and they shall offer sacrifices to the Lord in justice. And the sacrifice of Juda and of Jerusalem shall please the Lord, as the days of old, and the ancient years: saith the Lord Almighty.

EXPLANATION. The angel or messenger who shall prepare the way for the Lord, is John the Baptist, (*Matt. xi. 10.*) and the long desired Ruler and Messiah is Christ, who on this day comes into his temple. He is called the Angel of the testament, because He has arranged between God and man a new and far more excellent covenant than God had made with the Jews; inasmuch as He has given to the Christians not merely temporal but eternal good. This Angel of the testament, Christ, came the first time in all the humility of a little child into the temple, but His second coming at the end of the world will be terrible. The prophet likens Him to a fire which purifies the gold, and to that herb with which cloth is whitened in the fuller's machine; under which figures he alludes to the severity of judgment, with which Christ will judge the just and the unjust. Pure as refined gold, and as the white linen (corporal) on which the Body of Christ is laid in the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, must be the heart of those who receive Christ in the blessed Sacrament, or seek worthily to offer the holy Sacrifice with the priest.





GOSPEL. (*Luke* ii. 22—32.) AT THAT TIME, After the days of Mary's purification, according to the law of Moses, were accomplished, they carried Jesus to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord, as it is written in the law of the Lord: Every male opening the womb shall be called holy to the Lord. And to offer a sacrifice, according as it is written in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons. And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Ghost was



in him. And he had received an answer from the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. And he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when his parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the law: he also took him into his arms, and blessed God, and said: Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word, in peace: Because my eyes have seen thy salvation: which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples: a light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

*Why was Jesus brought into the temple of Jerusalem?*

That He might be offered to God, who had commanded the Jews to offer their first-born sons to Him in grateful commemoration of the destroying angel having spared their first-born at the departure from Egypt, when all the first-born of the Egyptians were slain. (*Exodus* xii. 12.) These children had to be redeemed afterwards by certain gifts. (*Exodus* xiii. 13.)

*How soon after birth was this offering to be made?*

On the fortieth day; for according to the law the mother's impurity lasted for this length of time after the birth of a boy, after which she went to the temple, and in order to be declared purified, made her offering of purification. (*Lev.* xii.)

*Was Mary subject to this law of purification?*

No, for she had not, like other mothers, conceived in sin, and, therefore, did not need purification; but she placed herself with her divine Child among sinners and fulfilled the law by which these were bound. "Nothing", says St. Bernard, "was impure in her conception, nothing impure in her birth; there was nothing to be cleansed, for the Child itself was the origin of all purity, and came into the world to purify it from sin. Truly, O happy Virgin, thou wast not in need of purification, but thou wouldst pass as a woman among women, as thy Son also passed for a child among children."



*Why did Mary comply with the law of purification?*

She did this to give us an example of obedience and true humility, for she interiorly thought little of herself and wished externally to be so regarded; to teach us to thank God for the favors He has shown to our ancestors, for the law of the Jews was given to encourage them to gratitude for the preservation of the first-born of their ancestors from the hands of the destroying angel; (*Exodus* xii. 12.) and in order not to scandalize, by being regardless of this law, those who did not know that she was not required to observe it.

Learn, O Christian, from Mary's example to be truly humble and obedient, to be grateful to God for the benefits which your ancestors and parents have received, and to be on your guard never to give scandal, by failing to observe the commandments of God and His Church.

*Why did not Mary offer a lamb as did the rich, (Lev. xii. 6). but merely, like the poor, a pair of doves?*

Because she was poor, and was not ashamed to appear as such before the world. Mary loved humility and the poverty connected with it. Be not ashamed, therefore, if thou art poor, love poverty the more; but if rich, be poor in spirit, and love the poor and distressed.

*How did it come to pass that Simeon met the Saviour in the temple?*

Because he was a pious and faithful servant of God, it had been promised him that he should not die, until he had seen the Saviour. When Jesus was brought into the temple, Simeon was inspired by God to go there also, and when he found Jesus there, he by divine inspiration knew Him to be the Messiah, and gave testimony of Him.

See how God rewards those who sincerely love and serve Him, giving Himself to them to be known always more and more!

*Why was Simeon ready to die when he had held Jesus in his arms?*

Because his wish was fulfilled; for since he had not only seen with his own eyes, but had held in his arms the Desired of all nations, for whom the patriarchs had so vainly longed, what more could he wish than to leave this miserable world, and commend his spirit into the hands of his Saviour?



*Why did Simeon call Jesus a light for the revelation of the Gentiles?*

Because Jesus had come into the world as the true light, (*John* i. 9) which was to free the Gentiles from the darkness of superstition and idolatry, and from the blindness and slavery of Satan, as well as to conduct the Jews out of the bondage of the Mosaic Law into the liberty of the children of God. (*Gal.* iv. 31.)

PRAYER. Heavenly Father! look down from Thy throne of mercy upon the face of Thy Anointed in whom Thou art well pleased. Behold, He is this day offered to Thee in the temple for the sins of His brethren. Let this offering please Thee, and move Thee to have compassion on us sinners. In consideration of His humility and obedience, forgive us our pride and disobedience, and grant us, that purified by His blood, we may one day, having like Simeon departed this life in peace, behold Thee as the eternal Light which shall never be extinguished in the temple of Thy glory, be presented to Thee by Mary, our beloved Mother, and love and praise Thee forever. Amen.

#### INSTRUCTION ON CHURCHING.

**I**n the Jewish law (*Lev.* xii.) women for forty days after the birth of a boy, and for eighty after that of a girl, were regarded as unclean and kept out of the temple, and required, at the end of that time, to bring a lamb as a holocaust, and a dove as a propitiatory sacrifice to the temple, and be pronounced pure by the prayer of the priest. This law does not, it is true, apply to Christian women, because the Church has abolished the Jewish ceremonies: but the Church, nevertheless, permits them to remain absent from church for six weeks, or so long as circumstances may require, after the birth of a child, in order to take care of their health. This should be remembered by husbands, who should see that their wives have the necessary quiet and attendance which nature requires for recovery after the birth of a child. The Church desires that at the end of this time the mother, following Mary's example, should resort to the church to obtain the blessing of the priest,



thank God for her delivery, offer the child to God, praying with the priest for the grace to bring up her offspring in sanctity and piety. This comprises the Churching of women, which is a very old and praiseworthy custom and should not be neglected. This practice was not instituted to prevent their being harmed by the devil, by malicious persons, or by ghosts, and it would be not only a foolish fear, but a superstition to be condemned, if one were to suppose that a woman were liable to harm if she should go abroad before she were churching. The delicate health of women and of children is generally owing to their having injured themselves by want of proper care and attention.

PRAYER. Almighty and beneficent God! who didst impose upon our mother Eve, in punishment for her sin, that she should give birth to her children in pain: I offer to Thee all the pains which I have thus suffered in atonement for my sins, and thank Thee, that I have safely brought a child into the world, whom I now offer to Thee, according to the example of the Mother of Thine only-begotten Son, for Thy holy service, whom I shall zealously endeavor to educate for Thy honor. Give me but this grace through the intercession and merits of this most blessed Mother. Bless me and my child, and grant, that we may here live in accordance with Thy divine will, and receive eternal salvation. Through Christ, our Lord, &c. Amen.

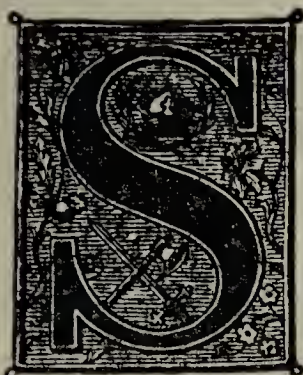
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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. BLASE, BISHOP AND MARTYR.

[February 3.]

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T. BLASE was born at Sebaste, in Armenia. In his youth he gave himself with great zeal to the study of philosophy and medicine, but at the same time did not forget his soul. He followed Christ in beautiful virtues, especially in meekness and humility, and kept from the sinful ways of the world. He was appointed bishop of Sebaste at the earnest solicitations of its inhabitants. At that time the Christians, especially the bishops and priests, suffered many persecutions from the pagans; persecutions from which Sebaste did not escape. That his life might be saved for his flock, St. Blase withdrew to a grotto in Mount Agaeus, where he led a most penitent life, and entirely destroyed the old man in himself. If one masters his corrupt nature, subdues his evil inclinations, and banishes everything earthly from himself, then his course of life becomes a heavenly one, and he becomes master over the earthly, material life, so that all nature is his friend and servant. So it was with St. Blase. The animals of the forests became his friends and served him; they approached him with confidence, permitted themselves to be caressed by him, had their wounds healed by him, received his blessing, brought him food, and obeyed his voice. A hunter one day met him in the midst of these animals, and forthwith reported the saintly man to the governor, who sent his officers to apprehend him. St. Blase went cordially to meet them, and when they reached the door of his cave, he said: "You are welcome, for now I see that God has not forgotten me." When they were returning with him, the animals followed, and the officers terrified would have fled, but St. Blase reassured them: "Be not afraid," he said, "they will do you no harm," and ordered the animals to go back. They obeyed, but for a long time looked sadly after him. While on his way many people came on the road to see the saint and to ask his blessing; among them a woman whose child was suffering from the effects of having swallowed a fish-bone. She was inconsolable, and cried out to the saint: "O dearest master, help my child, or it will be strangled!" The saint knelt down, prayed, blessed the child with the sign of the cross, and it was immediately cured.



When the saint had reached the city, he was taken before the governor who ordered him to worship the gods. Refusing to do this, he was struck with clubs; while thus tortured, he said to the governor: "Do you indeed fancy, that by torture you can force me to forsake my Lord and my God? You are indeed wrong, no pain shall separate me from my Jesus." The governor, then, was so enraged that he had him bound to a pillar and torn to pieces by iron claws. St. Blase calmly looking up to heaven, suffered all without uttering a single moan. He was then taken to prison, where the governor allowed him to remain for a time. Once more called to the judgment-seat, the saint again firmly refused to offer sacrifice to idols, and the governor then ordered that he should be beheaded.

The Church venerates his memory on the third of February. After the Mass on this day, the priest, holding two burning candles, touches with them the necks of the faithful while he pronounces the following blessing: "Through the intercession of the holy bishop and martyr Blase, may the Lord preserve thee from every disease of the throat, and all other evils, in the name † of the Father, † and of the Son, † and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." It is a very ancient custom to invoke St. Blase in all diseases of the throat, hence this blessing.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who dost gladden us with the yearly solemnity of blessed Blase, Thy martyr and bishop: mercifully grant, that as we celebrate his birth-day to immortality, so we may also rejoice in his protection. Thro'. &c.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. SCHOLASTICA, VIRGIN, AND ABBESS.

[February 10.]



HIS saint was sister to the great St. Benedict. From her earliest youth she consecrated herself to God, as did her holy brother. Where her first monastery was situated is not known; but after her brother removed to Mount Cassino, she chose her retreat at Plombariola, in that neighborhood, where she founded and governed a Benedictine nunnery about five miles distant to the south from St. Benedict's monastery. This she did, not to be near her brother, for she understood well the meaning of our Lord's call to leave all and follow Him. She would never have tolerated the claims of natural relationship, had it stood in the way of that higher claim. She wished to dwell near her brother because she desired to be guided, supported and consoled by his counsel. Why should she not? Are not pilgrims, groaning and laboring along the way of Heaven through ordinary life, helped and cheered when some fellow-traveler, like Simon the Cyrenian, comes and holds up even one limb of their cross; and may not souls who are treading the higher paths to perfection the more seek and give such assistance and mutual cheer! — St. Scholastica visited her holy brother once a year, and as she was not permitted to enter his monastery, he went out with some of his monks to meet her at a house at some distance from his monastery. Such times were special high festivals to the soul of Scholastica. During the brief period of her brother's visit she then gathered abundantly the manna of heavenly instruction to store it up for after-thought and after-prayer.

St. Gregory the Great, himself a Benedictine monk before his elevation to the throne of St. Peter, relates a remarkable circumstance of the last of these visits. He tells us of his spiritual father St. Benedict, and of the holy abbess Scholastica; how the brother and sister met for the last time, and how they spoke together of the heaven to which her pure soul was soon to take its flight. His words are very touching in their affectionate simplicity; he says:

"On a day she came, as was her wont; her venerable brother with his disciples descended to meet her. Having then spent the whole day in the praises of God, and in discoursing on sacred things, they took their repast together.



**ST. SCHOLASTICA.**

And while they still sat at table, and amid such speech concerning sacred things, the hour drew on to be late, this holy religious, his sister, besought him, saying: "I pray thee that thou go not hence this night, but that we may discourse till morning of the joys of heavenly life." To which he answered: "What is this thou sayest, my sister? I can in nowise remain out of my cell." Now, so calm were



the heavens that no cloud was to be seen in the sky. But the holy religious, hearing her brother thus refuse her, placed her hands on the table, with fingers clasped, and bowed her head in her hands, in supplication to the Lord Almighty. And when she raised her head from the table, so mighty were the lightning and thunder that broke forth, and such was the deluge of rain, that neither venerable Benedict nor the brethren who were with him could stir a foot over the threshold of the place where they sat. For that holy religious, when she bowed her head on her hands, had poured forth a flood of tears upon the table, and thereby had changed to rain the serenity of the sky. Nor did that rain follow upon her prayers with an interval, however small; but there was so exact a concurrence of prayer and of flood that the raising of her head from the table was simultaneous with the pealing of the thunder; insomuch that in one and the same moment was the raising of the head and the descent of the rain. Then the man of God, amid lightning and thunder and a great inundation, seeing himself unable to return to his monastery, began to complain as one aggrieved, saying: "Almighty God forgive thee, sister; what is this thou hast done?" To which she answered: "See, I asked of thee, and thou wouldst not hear me; I have asked my God, and He hath heard me; now, therefore, if thou canst, go forth; leave me and return to thy monastery." But finding it impossible to leave the house, he who had refused to remain there of his own accord, now remained perforce. And so it was that the whole night they spent in wakeful, holy conversation touching the spiritual life and mutual consolation in this interchange of soul. And when the following day, the said venerable religious maiden had withdrawn to her own cloister, the man of God returned to his monastery. When behold, after three days, as he stood in his cell, his eyes raised to heaven, he saw the disembodied soul of his sister, in the form of a dove, penetrating the inner heavens. And rejoicing with her for her great glory, he gave thanks to Almighty God in hymns and praises, and announced her death to his brethren; whom also he sent to bring her body to the monastery, and lay it into the tomb which he had prepared for himself. So that they, whose souls had ever been one in God, were not divided even in their bodies' burial."

St. Scholastica must have received strong pledges and most sensible tokens of God's love, or she would not have so firmly depended on receiving so readily what she asked of God. No child could address himself with so great



confidence to his most tender parent. The short prayer by which she gained this remarkable victory over her brother, who was one of the greatest saints on earth, was doubtless no more than a single act of her pure desire, which she continually turned towards God. Her whole life in her retirement, to that happy moment which closed her mortal pilgrimage, was a continued uniform contemplation, by which all her powers were united to, and transformed in God. St. Scholastica died about the year 543. Her festival is celebrated on the 10th of February.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who, to show the innocence of her life, didst cause the soul of Thy blessed virgin Scholastica to ascend into heaven in the form of a dove; grant, by her merits and prayers, that we may live so innocently, as to deserve to arrive at eternal joys. Through &c.

*(For Epistle and Gospel see Feast of St. Bridget, 1st of February.)*

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. MATTHIAS, APOSTLE.

*[February 24. or 25.]*



ATTHIAS, born in Bethlehem of Juda, was at the commencement of Christ's preaching numbered by Him among the seventy-two disciples, and everywhere accompanied our Saviour and witnessed all His miracles and His resurrection. After Christ's ascension, Matthias was chosen apostle in place of the traitor Judas, as is detailed in the Lesson of this day, and after the descent of the Holy Ghost announced the gospel first to his own people, the Jews, and then in Cappadocia and the neighborhood of the Caspian Sea. Having preached the doctrine of salvation in many countries, especially urging, as St. Clement of Alexandria relates, abstinence from carnal pleasures, he was stoned by the Jews in Galilee who wished not to hear his sermons, and was finally beheaded by the Roman soldiers about the year 63.

*[For the Introit see the Feast of St. Andrew.]*



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who didst join the blessed Matthias to the company of Thine apostles: grant, we beseech Thee, that, by his intervention, we may continually experience the bowels of Thy mercy towards us. Thro'. &c.

LESSON. (*Acts* i. 15—26.) IN THOSE DAYS, Peter rising up in the midst of the brethren, said (now the number of persons together was about a hundred and twenty): Men and brethren, the scripture must needs be fulfilled which the Holy Ghost spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who was the leader of them that apprehended Jesus: who was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. And he indeed hath possessed a field of the reward of iniquity, and, being hanged, burst asunder in the midst; and all his bowels gushed out. And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the same field was called in their tongue Hacedama, that is to say, the Field of blood. For it is written in the book of Psalms: Let their habitation become desolate, and let there be none to dwell therein: and his bishopric let another take. Wherefore of these men who have companied with us, all the time that the Lord Jesus came in and went out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day wherein he was taken up from us, one of these must be made a witness with us of his resurrection. And they appointed two, Joseph, called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And praying, they said: Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen, to take the place of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas hath by transgression fallen, that he might go to his own place. And they gave them lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.



*How did Judas possess a field?*

By the reward of his treason. Repenting of his crime Judas threw down its price in the temple; the high-priests would not accept it for the treasury of the temple, because it was the price of blood, and it was, therefore, used to purchase a field to be a burial place for strangers dying in Jerusalem, and received the name Haceldama, the field of blood. (*Matt.* xxvii, 3—8.)

See how much avarice profited Judas, and learn from his miserable fate the danger of this vice, and all other passions, which are not immediately exterminated.

INSTRUCTION. Let us learn from the apostles who prayed so fervently at the election of Matthias, the necessity of prayer in the election of priests or rulers of the state, that God may so direct us, that the choice may fall on men who are really suitable for the office. The neglect of prayer, and the carnal, selfish considerations which move many electors, often cause men to be chosen who administer their office badly, and do more harm than good. If the choice is not directed by God, as it was in the case of St. Matthias, but according to human sentiments, then, generally, instead of a Matthias a Judas is chosen. From this, that none of the disciples presented himself as a candidate for the apostleship, we should learn not to force ourselves into spiritual office and dignity, but await the call of God, because we dare not promise ourselves the grace necessary to fulfil its duties. All who are about choosing their state of life, must remember to pray fervently for light that they may know the state for which God designs them; for we can be saved only with great difficulty in a station of life which we have entered contrary to the will of God, and from the promptings of sinful passions.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xi. 25—30.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus answering, said: I confess to thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones. Yea, Father: for so hath it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered to me by my Father. And no one knoweth the Son, but the Father: neither doth any one know the Father, but the Son, and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal him. Come to me all you that labor, and are burdened,



and I will refresh you. Take up my yoke upon you, and learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart: and you shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is sweet, and my burden light.

*Why did Christ say: I confess to thee, O Father, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones?*

To give thanks to His Heavenly Father for having revealed the mysteries of His incarnation and humiliation in life, not to those who wish in their pride to penetrate everything with their short-sighted human reason, and therefore despise the mysterious works of God, but to the little, that is, the humble ones, who, like the apostles, make their reasoning obedient to the service of Christ and the faith, and so become worthy to be interiorly enlightened by God, like the apostles, and to understand His mysteries.

*How were all things delivered by the Father to Christ?*

By making Christ, since He sent Him into the world, the Teacher and Model of kings and rulers, the Redeemer and the Judge of all men, and giving Him all power in heaven and on earth. (*Matt. xxviii. 18.*)

*Why is it that no one knows the Father but the Son and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal him?*

Because no one but the God-Man, Christ, knows perfectly the incomprehensible mystery of the Most Holy Trinity, and no one can acquire the knowledge of God and the true faith, except through Christ.

*Why does no one know the Son but the Father?*

Because only God can comprehend the eternal birth and the origin of Christ, as regards His divinity, His divine perfections and attributes, and the mystery of the redemption.

*Who are those who labor and are burdened?*

Those who labor for justice and strive to attain perfection; who are obliged to endure persecution and annoyance, and those who are weighed down with the burden of grievous sins.



*How does Christ refresh them?*

By His grace He refreshes the first, that they may attain justice; the second He consoles and strengthens, that they may not become faint-hearted; the last He forgives, (if they do penance) remits their punishment, and so relieves them of their burden.

*What is the yoke of Christ?*

It is the light yoke of the commandment to love God and our neighbor.

*What have we principally to learn of Christ?*

To be meek and humble of heart. We are meek, when, after Christ's example, we bear injuries patiently, and do not avenge them; and humble of heart, if we acknowledge our weakness and unworthiness, have not an exalted opinion of ourselves, and seek not to be esteemed by others, or as St. Bonaventure says, "if we despise ourselves and the world, but no person in it, and are glad to be ourselves disregarded." This, Christ tells us, is the only way to true peace of mind, and to temporal and eternal happiness; to leave this path, and enter on one of anger and pride, is to lose the road to heaven.

PRAYER. O most meek and humble Jesus! we thank Thee for Thy loving invitation to us who labor and are burdened, promising us rest and refreshment, and we beseech Thee to grant, that in all trials and difficulties we may take refuge to Thee, and become by meekness and humility less unworthy of Thy refreshing consolation.

## ON THE OBSERVANCE OF THE COMMANDMENTS.

*My yoke is sweet and my burden light. (Matt. xi. 30.)*

*Can we keep the commandments?*

**A**SSUREDLY, with God's grace which Christ has obtained for us and continually offers us, we can keep the commandments. If we could not, the yoke of Christ would not be sweet, but unendurable, and St. John could not with truth have said: The commandments of God are not hard. (i. *John* v. 3.) If the commandments were really as hard to keep as some sacrilegiously declare, then God would



have been unjust and unwise, for He would have imposed upon men laws that could not be fulfilled, and for the non-fulfillment of which He threatens to punish them. But God requires nothing that is impossible. "The law," writes St. Augustine, "is given us that we may seek for grace, and grace is given us that we may fulfil the law, and whatever God demands He gives grace to perform," because "He encourages us, by His commands, to do what we can, and pray for that which we cannot do, for because He helps us, we can." (*Conc. Trid. Sess. 6. c. 11.*)

*Can we be saved without observing the commandments?*

No, for Christ expressly says: If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. (*Matt. xix. 17.*) It is to be observed that Christ says: If thou wilt, He wishes not to force any one; He requires that we come voluntarily; He shows us the way and gives us help to follow it. So He says: "Take my yoke upon you!" I impose it not against your will. Take it for yourself, otherwise you will not find rest for your soul, but misery.

PRAYER TO ST. MATTHIAS. O saint Matthias, glorious apostle and martyr of Jesus Christ, who so urged to abstinence and the keeping of the commandments, I beseech thee who wast chosen by God from all eternity, to obtain from Him the grace for us, that by the keeping of the commandments, by mortification, and good works, we may be numbered among the chosen ones. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, &c. Amen.

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ST PATRICK PRAY

FOR YOUR CHILDREN

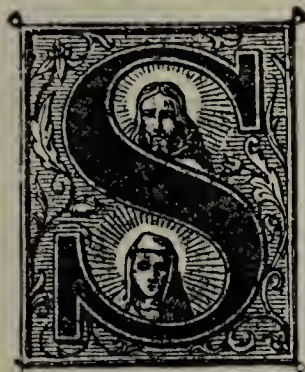




## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. PATRICK, BISHOP AND APOSTLE OF IRELAND.

*[March 17.]*

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**S**T. PATRICK was born in the decline of the fourth century in a village called Bonaven Taberniae, in Armoric Gaul, being the same as the present Boulogne sur-Mer, in Picardy. His father Calphurnius was of a noble Roman family, his mother Conchessa was sister to St. Martin of Tours. Patrick remained in his father's house until his fifteenth year, and then as he says in his book entitled "Confessions" and written towards the end of his life, God was pleased to lead him to his high vocation through a very painful and laborious preparatory school.

In those remote times Ireland was a mountainous, inhospitable country, covered with forests, bogs and morasses. Her inhabitants were wild and unpolished, lived by war and plunder; only a few of them had some little knowledge of the true God. The Britons, on the contrary, under the sway of the Romans had already attained a certain degree of culture and had adopted the Christian faith. The Irish, however, were hardier warriors than the effeminate Britons; in their naval expeditions they visited the shores of England, landed here and there, attacked villages and unfortified towns, sacked them, and carried the inhabitants into slavery. A swarm of rapacious Irish assailed a manor belonging to Calphurnius, and cut down the domestics who attempted to resist. The parents were absent, but young Patrick and a number of the male servants were made prisoners and carried over to Ireland. From this day the son of Calpurnius, hitherto accustomed to the comforts of a wealthy home, entered upon a long and severe novitiate of six years. Slave to a coarse barbarian, he had to drive his master's cattle into the woods, to guard and feed them; frequently he spent, unsheltered, whole nights among bogs and marshes, and was often cruelly beaten. Thus engaged in an endless struggle against hunger and thirst, heat and cold, deprived of every earthly consolation, and of every hope of deliverance, St. Patrick was taught by his misfortunes, in fervent prayers to have recourse to God and His blessed Providence which always knows and possesses the means to console



those who lovingly confide in it. St. Patrick now commenced a new life; a celestial light illumined his soul, and warmed his heart. He examined his past life; sorrow for having squandered so many years in not perfectly loving God, drew the most bitter tears from his eyes. Even towards the end of his life, as the saint himself avows in his book of Confessions, every day he bewailed that time of his youth not devoted to God. Humble and resigned, he henceforth suffered all in a spirit of penance, and with confidence in the goodness of God, awaited the hour of his deliverance.

At length, after a severe trial of six years, this hour arrived for Patrick. In a dream he was ordered to leave his master's house and go to the sea-shore; there he would find a vessel ready to take him on board. Patrick obeyed. After a journey of several days he arrived at the very spot shown him in the dream, and there found a vessel about to start. But, unfortunately, Patrick had no money to pay his passage, and in spite of all prayers the master of the ship refused to take him on board. Deeply afflicted Patrick was about to return to his master, but he had scarcely taken a few steps, when the owner became good-humored, recalled him and took him on board.

After a favorable voyage they landed on the shore of Northern Scotland, a desert in which they wandered about, nowhere discovering a human abode. Their provisions had all given out. Patrick's companions were yet heathens; he had, on board, told them of the God of the Christians and of His infinite love. Almost starving, they now reminded Patrick of his words, and besought him to implore his God. For if the God of the Christians, they said, is really almighty and merciful, he can and will save us from starvation.

Patrick, penetrated by a lively faith, resolutely promised them assistance within an hour, in case of their sincere conversion to the true God. He was immediately absorbed in silent prayer, and no sooner had the hour elapsed, when they encountered a herd of swine, which sufficed as provision to the end of their voyage of twenty-four days.

Patrick's patience, however, was subjected to another severe trial. Though his pagan companions had witnessed how soon his prayer was heard, yet before eating they sacrificed to their idols all the flesh; this forced Patrick to abhor all such meat and rather suffer the most fearful hunger than defile himself by eating it. He was less afflicted by his own hunger and thirst, than by the incomprehensible spiritual blindness of these heathens, who in spite of an evident miracle would not desist from their idolatry. Finally,



after many days of suffering, Patrick happily reached his home; where, however, he enjoyed only a short repose. He was a second and third time captured, but was soon released.

When God had by these years of suffering prepared His servant for the high vocation of being Ireland's guide to the only saving faith, He called him to the priesthood. Being absorbed in prayer Patrick, in a vision, saw himself carried over to Ireland, and there he beheld a multitude of children, who with piteous cries stretched out their hands for help, as if they were in great need. In another vision he heard voices from the western shore, which cried out to him: "Come, we beseech thee, walk among us!"

Patrick resolved to obey this heavenly call; but was opposed on all sides, and above all by his parents, who almost persuaded him to give up his pious purpose. God Himself, however, in a series of wonderful apparitions revealed to Patrick His adorable will. The saint was thus strengthened and became firmly determined to go to Ireland in order to bear salvation to her people. None would accompany him to the work of saving those poor, neglected souls. — He was consecrated bishop, that he might afterwards ordain such Irish converts, as by zeal and science should be qualified to be his co-laborers. Having overcome many obstacles Patrick left all, his native country, his parents and relations, to embark for the northernmost border of the then known world, to spread the light of the Gospel. He had during a six years captivity acquired the Irish language and was thus enabled to preach to them the doctrine of the cross in their mother-tongue.

His success was wonderful. Wheresoever he came, the people flocked together and, as it were, clung to the lips of the saintly preacher; hunters and warriors were changed into docile, calm and obedient lambs, and at the close of each sermon all would stretch forth their arms towards him, beseeching him for the sacrament of Baptism. He baptized them as soon as they were sufficiently instructed in every article of faith.

The saint seeing the great success of his apostolic work provided this vineyard of Christ with necessary laborers. For this purpose he selected such converts for each district, as proved sufficiently zealous and educated, and by the imposition of his episcopal hands ordained them acolytes, deacons and priests. To this young Irish clergy, as also to the prospering parishes, St. Patrick carefully imparted all good counsel and directed them wisely, at the same time erecting churches in all parts of the country. After the



saint had labored much upon this Island, Britain at last remembered him, and sent to him co-laborers, the bishops Auxentius and Iserinus, whose aid the saint most joyfully accepted. He immediately erected a number of episcopal seats, to which he gave intelligent and pious bishops. — Nor even did it suffice the apostle of Ireland to strengthen and fortify in their faith those already converted; he moreover desired to lead them upon the very path of Christian perfection. He taught, therefore, young widows to devote their lives to continence; he persuaded young, tender maidens to transform their bodies into living temples of God by preserving their precious purity unsullied; he, moreover, encouraged wealthy youths to bestow their riches upon the needy, and to follow Jesus with free and undivided hearts. No sooner had the saint commenced to guide souls on this seemingly rough, but actually delightful path, than they increased to such a number, as to compel him to erect monasteries for both sexes. — One day he baptized a beautiful young girl of exceedingly fine form, and scarcely sixteen years of age. A few days after the girl returned to St. Patrick informing him of an apparition which she had, (perhaps her guardian angel) in which it was made known to her that it would be agreeable and pleasing to God, if she would devote her life exclusively to Him. The saint saw her heart, recognized this to be her vocation, and therefore gave her the sacred veil.

When advanced in years our saint had the joy and consolation to see nearly all Ireland adoring the crucified Saviour. He, therefore, prayed incessantly for the grace of perseverance on the part of his beloved flock which he had purchased with so many sufferings and trials. Truly, no other country ever has manifested the blessed influence of Holy Religion more perseveringly than Ireland. Half a century after its saintly apostle's death the people of Ireland rivalled every civilized nation. Every church and monastery, even at the time of St. Patrick, was provided with excellent schools; there great and celebrated masters reared scholars equally great and celebrated, so that in the course of several centuries men flocked to Ireland from all parts, there to quench their thirst for knowledge, there to cultivate their minds and to receive the doctrines of salvation at a fount, which they well knew to be pure and unsullied. Ireland became the school of saints, so that she even deserved to be styled "Isle of the Saints." Numerous Irish, as for instance, SS. Columban, Gallus, Fridolin, Chilian and others went to France and Germany, there to propagate the true faith in Christ.



St. Patrick died at a very advanced age. His body, deposited in a church at Down, was discovered in the year 1185. Ireland, despite all persecutions and oppressions, has stood faithful and kept the faith of her great apostle, St. Patrick. Down to the present day every Irish heart remembers St. Patrick, its champion and Patron with sentiments of singular gratitude and devotedness.

At the Introit of the Mass the Church says: The Lord made to him a covenant of peace, and made him a prince: that the dignity of priesthood should be to him forever. (*Ecclus.* xlv.) O Lord, remember David, and all his meekness. (*Ps.* cxxxi.) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who didst vouchsafe to send the blessed Patrick Thy confessor and bishop to declare Thy glory to the nations: grant, through his merits and intercession, that what Thou commandest us to do, we may by Thy mercy be able to accomplish. Thro'. &c.

LESSON. (*Ecclus.* xlv. 17.—xlv. 20.) BEHOLD, a great priest, who in his days pleased God, and was found just: and in the time of wrath was made a reconciliation. There was not any found like to him, who kept the law of the Most High. Therefore by an oath the Lord made him increase among his people. He gave him the blessing of all nations, and confirmed his covenant upon his head. He acknowledged him in his blessings: he preserved for him his mercy: and he found grace before the eyes of the Lord. He glorified him in the sight of kings, and gave him a crown of glory. He made an everlasting covenant with him, and gave him a great priesthood, and made him blessed in glory: to execute the office of the priesthood, and to have praise in his name: and to offer him worthy incense for an odor of sweetness.

EXPLANATION. The text of the chapters from which this lesson is taken refers to the great and holy men of the Old Law, as to Enoch, Noë, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and Aaron. God found these men just, and He, therefore, showered upon them His graces and blessings,



and exalted them above the powerful of this earth. In like manner St. Patrick, the great priest of God, was blessed and exalted, because he was pleasing to God, and found just, he was a model of all Christian virtues. God blessed him like Abraham making him the spiritual father of a great nation. The praise of the Almighty was continually on the lips of St. Patrick, and the incense of prayer and of good works daily ascended to His throne; God, therefore, honored him on earth and crowned him with the diadem of eternal glory in Heaven.

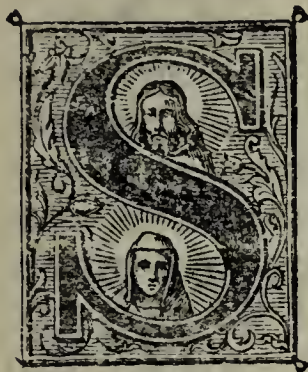
GOSPEL. (*Matt. xxv. 14—23.*) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke this parable to his disciples: A man going into a far country, called his servants, and delivered to them his goods. And to one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one, to every one according to his proper ability, and immediately he took his journey. And he that had received the five talents went his way, and traded with the same, and gained other five. And in like manner he that had received the two, gained other two. But he that had received the one, going his way, digged into the earth, and hid his lord's money. But after a long time, the lord of those servants came and reckoned with them. And he that had received the five talents coming, brought other five talents, saying: Lord, thou didst deliver to me five talents, behold, I have gained other five over and above. His lord said to him: Well done, good and faithful servant: because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. And he also that had received the two talents came and said: Lord, thou deliveredst two talents to me, behold, I have gained other two. His lord said to him: Well done, good and faithful servant, because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

(*For explanation see feast of St. Nicholas, Dec. 6th.*)



## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. JOSEPH.

[March 19.]



**S**T. JOSEPH of the royal blood of David, was a mechanic in Nazareth of Galilee, where he was espoused to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The gospel praises him very highly, calling him a just man, chosen by God from among men to be the foster-father of Christ who was subject to him as He was to His blessed Mother. The history of his childhood and youth has not been preserved, and of it, as of the rest of his life, we know only that which is related by the Evangelists. As we do not read that he was present at the marriage in Cana, it is supposed that before the commencement of Christ's ministry he died a happy death in the arms of Jesus and Mary.

The Introit of the Mass reads: The just shall flourish like the palm-tree: he shall grow up like the cedar of Libanus: planted in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God. It is good to give praise to the Lord: and to sing to Thy name, O Most High! (*Ps. xci.*) Glory be to the Father &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** Vouchsafe, O Lord, that we may be helped by the merits of Thy most holy Mother's spouse: that what of ourselves we can not obtain may be given to us through his intercession. Who &c.

**LESSON.** (*Ecclus. xlv. 1—6.*) He was beloved of God and men, whose memory is in benediction. He made him like the saints in glory, and magnified him in the fear of his enemies, and with his words he appeased monsters. He glorified him in the sight of kings, and gave him commandments in the sight of his people, and showed him his glory. He sanctified him in his faith and meekness, and chose him out of all flesh. For he heard him and his voice, and brought



him into a cloud. And he gave him commandments before his face, and a law of life and instruction.

APPLICATION. What is here said of Moses, may justly be applied to St. Joseph, for which reason the Church chooses this lesson for his festival day. That St. Joseph was beloved of God, is shown by his being chosen the foster-father of the Son of God, Jesus Christ; his memory is in benediction, and how could it be otherwise than blessed. He was the foster-father of Him who from the commencement of the world, as its Creator, blessed all creatures, and who, by His death, as Redeemer, procured blessings and graces for us who, on account of our sins, deserved the curse of God. God has placed St. Joseph with the saints, and glorified him before all kings, for he was not only of royal blood, but he was foster-father to the King of kings. His humility, his purity and his faithful love of Mary enabled him while on earth to hear the tender voice of Jesus; God has also brought him into a cloud, that is, taken him up to heaven, where he now sees Him face to face, and is a most powerful intercessor for man.

GOSPEL. (*Matt. i. 18—21.*) WHEN Mary, the mother of Jesus, was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Whereupon Joseph, her husband, being a just man, and not willing publicly to expose her, was minded to put her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in his sleep, saying: Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son: and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.

*Why was the Blessed Virgin espoused to St. Joseph?*

St. Jerome gives the following answer to this question: that by Joseph's descent from the house of David it might be established that Jesus and Mary belonged to the same line, for in the Old Law a woman was not permitted to marry out of her own tribe, when there were no male heirs; that Mary might not be stoned to death, as she would





have been, if found unmarried with child; that Christ might not be regarded as an illegitimate child and be, therefore, despised and repudiated; and that, as St. Ignatius the Martyr says, the birth of Christ thus might remain concealed from the devil who, therefore, believed that Christ was not born of a virgin, but of a wife; finally, that Mary might have consolation and assistance, as at the time of the flight with Jesus into Egypt.



*Why did St. Joseph wish to leave Mary privately?*

Because he was not instructed concerning the divine mysteries, and could not from her pure, blameless life understand Mary's condition, and was too charitable to think or assert evil of her, or put her to shame.

*Why did not Mary reveal these mysteries to him?*

Because of the humility which she loved so much that she would rather be suspected of evil than reveal the great grace which God had shown her; besides she also trusted that God Himself would care for her and make her innocence manifest.

### ON THE VENERATION OF ST. JOSEPH.

**S**T. Alphonsus Liguori writes that the example of Christ who so highly venerated St. Joseph while on earth, and who during his whole life was obedient to him, should suffice to inspire all hearts with devotion to this great saint; and he, whom the King of kings placed so high, indeed deserves especial veneration from man. To encourage this veneration, St. Theresa wrote: "I do not remember that I ever prayed to St. Joseph for anything which he did not procure for me; the great graces God has given me through him, and the many dangers of body and soul from which he has preserved me, are indeed truly wonderful. It seems as if God has given to other saints the grace to assist in some special manner those who seek their intercession; but of this glorious saint my experience is that he assists in every need. The Lord appears to show by this, that as He was subject to him on earth, so in heaven he does every thing which St. Joseph requests of Him. Others, whom I have advised to have recourse to him, have experienced the same thing. I would gladly so advise every one." "I have a great devotion to this saint," continues St. Alphonsus, "because I have so often experienced that he can obtain so much from God. For many years I have been accustomed to ask a special grace on his festival, and my prayer is always answered. As we must all die, we should all have a special devotion to St. Joseph, for all Catholics consider him as the patron of the dying, who assists in the hour of death those who have venerated him, and this for three reasons: because Jesus loves Him, not only as a friend, but as His father, on which account he is a more powerful intercessor than any other saint; because St. Joseph has a special power against evil spirits who attack us in the hour



of death; for since he freed our Saviour from the snares of Herod, God has given him the power to guard the dying from the attacks of the devil; lastly the assistance which Jesus and Mary rendered him in the hour of death, gives him the right to procure a sweet and holy death for his servants. If they, therefore, invoke him in the hour of death, he will not only aid them himself, but procure aid for them from Jesus and Mary." Should not these words of so great a saint encourage us daily to honor St. Joseph? Should not this hope of being assisted in the hour of death by Jesus, Mary and Joseph, move us to devotion to the foster-father of Christ?

PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH. O St. Joseph, Mary's pure bridegroom, who because of thy purity and love of justice wast chosen for the foster-father of Jesus Christ, do not leave me, I beseech thee, in my necessities and cares; ask for me the grace to live a just and pure life like thine, and grant, that I may obtain the happiness of dying, like thee, in the arms of Jesus and Mary. Amen.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. BENEDICT, PATRIARCH OF THE WESTERN MONKS.

*[March 21.]*

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**N**HAT which our farmers, and especially the first settlers, do in our wild and uncultivated western American regions, was once performed by the monks of St. Benedict within the domains of Northern Europe. They cleared the mighty forests which at that time afforded protection to the buffalo and the bear, they drained the marshes, changed wild plains into fruitful fields, they planted the vine and the fruit-trees. They preserved the sciences which had fallen into disrepute; they stored up in their cloisters libraries of the ancient classics, which without the sons of St. Benedict would not only be lost to succeeding generations, but not even be known as having once existed. They preserved the arts which were on the brink of perdition, erecting and





## ST. BENEDICT.

embellishing those great piles scattered in so large a number over all Europe. They performed a still greater work: they subjected the Goths, the Saxons, the Marcomanni, the Alemanni and others to the sweet yoke of the cross. Their value can never be sufficiently appreciated. In America also the children of St. Benedict have established themselves, in order to diffuse in that vast country the blessings of their holy founder.



Truly, St. Benedict was, as his name indicates, a child of blessing.

He was born about the year 480 at Nursia in Italy. His parents sent him, when very young, to Rome, that there he might be instructed in all the sciences. Benedict soon perceived the moral corruption of the Romans, and was seized with fear concerning his own innocence. In order to escape the enticements of the city he left Rome and sought his way to the mountains; thence he went to Subiaco, a day's journey from Rome, where he found a desert with inhospitable caverns in the mountain-cliffs. He had resolved to serve his God in solitude and retirement, and to acquire such virtues as would enable him to perform and undergo great labor for the Church and the welfare of his fellow-men.

On his way to the desert he met a holy monk, named Romanus, to whom he revealed his intention. Romanus gladly approved of the design, promising him to keep his secret, and gave him the religious habit. Benedict now chose for his dwelling-place an almost inaccessible narrow grotto at the foot of one of the mountain-cliffs. Romanus daily laid aside a portion of his bread, and secretly brought it to the young hermit, lowering it by means of a rope, to which a bell was attached to notify St. Benedict of its arrival.

Benedict spent his whole time in prayer, until God who was with him, made manifest his chosen instrument. Shepherds, feeding their flocks in the vicinity, one day discovered him. At first they believed him to be a beast, because he hid in the shrubs when perceiving himself discovered. They approached him and found to their astonishment that he was a human being. Our saint addressed them in a friendly manner, and availed himself of the opportunity to impress upon their minds the important and holy doctrines of the Christian religion, and thus effected in many of them an entire change of life.

Thus the holy man became known. In a very short time the inhabitants of the surrounding countries flocked around him, eager for their salvation. They listened with great attention to the saint's pious instructions, and were so moved and edified by them that many left the world and all its glory and confided themselves to his care. About this time it pleased God to visit him with a severe trial. Base phantoms and impure temptations tormented him day and night. He, however, overcame them by pious and fervent prayer and by an heroic act of self-command which was and will always be admired in him by all



succeeding generations; for when the demons already thought themselves victors, our saint undressed, threw himself into a bush of briars near his grotto, and rolled most vehemently, until his whole body was lacerated and formed but one wound. Thus he extinguished the flame of lust.

The fame of his sanctity daily increased and spread throughout the country. It also penetrated into a monastery, the monks of which entreated him to come and be their director. The holy man reluctantly consented. But some of the monks who were accustomed to a free and easy life would not comply with the pious rules and regulations which Benedict introduced. To rid themselves of him, they resolved to mingle poison with his wine. Benedict never ate or drank without first blessing the food. But when he came to bless the wine in the glass, the latter burst asunder and the mystery of their malice was unveiled. Benedict rose calmly, saying: "God forgive you, brethren, you now see I was not mistaken when I told you that your manners and mine would not agree." Saying this, Benedict returned to his beloved desert with the intention of living there in happy communion with God still more retired than ever.

The Almighty, however, wished that the light which he had kindled in Benedict, should no longer be hidden. The more the saint endeavored to withdraw from the society of men, so much the more disciples flocked around him. Their number daily increased, since they did not appear one by one but in troops, and demanded that they should all live together and form a community of which Benedict should be the abbot. The means for erecting the necessary edifices and procuring real estate, were not wanting, because the benefactors were numerous. Thus within the course of some years arose twelve monasteries, to each of which the saint gave an abbot. He himself lived in his cell on Mount Cavo, and retained with him only a few disciples to whom he was a kind teacher, abbot and instructor. The saint also wrote a rule for the monks of these monasteries, according to which they were to model their lives. This rule is this very day the principle of the spiritual life of the Benedictines, blessed by God for all ages. The holy life of St. Benedict and his disciples was not only known in the surrounding country, but the fame of it even reached Rome. The hearts of many young men burned with the desire of entering this holy community, and parents felt greatly consoled at having found a place of refuge, in which they could preserve their children from the allurements of the world. Many came to the saint, entreating him to



accept the tutorship of their young sons. Among these were two Roman senators who begged admission for their sons, named Maurus and Placidus. Maurus was twelve years of age, and brought his baptismal robe unstained into the monastery. He was loved very much by St. Benedict on account of his unfeigned humility, strict obedience and his purity of heart.

One day when St. Benedict was in his cell, Placidus whom he loved equally as well for his pure soul, went to the neighboring lake in order to get some water. Dipping his bucket too hastily into the water, he lost his balance and fell into the lake. Benedict perceiving the danger of the boy, immediately called Maurus. "Maurus," he exclaims, "quick, hasten, for the youth that was sent for water has fallen into the lake, and the waves are already carrying him off!" Maurus instantly begged the saint's blessing and hastened in full speed to the lake. He looked at the boy, and thinking of nothing but the command of saving him, walked on the water, and behold the miracle! he runs on the surface **as if it were ice**. Thus he reached the boy, seized him by the hair and pulled him along with him. Not until he had reached the shore did he become aware that he had been walking on the waters, when he almost fainted from fear and admiration. As soon as he had returned to the house, he narrated to St. Benedict what had taken place. The holy abbot replied that that was the reward of obedience. But Maurus answered that he had only done what he had been ordered to do, and that for his own part he could not perceive any virtuous act in complying with the command of his father. But behold! while they were thus engaged in holy contest, Placidus entered and acted as the deciding judge, by saying: "When I was drawn out of the water, I saw above my head the cloak of the abbot and perceived that it was he who dragged me to the shore."

For more than thirty years Benedict's light had sent its rays over the Sabine Mountains. Every one pronounced his name with reverence, and saw in him the universal spiritual benefactor, pastor and teacher. Whoever was in need of counsel came to him; those who sought instruction asked it of him; those who felt the necessity of prayer recommended themselves to him; in short, all had recourse to him in their troubles and anxieties, and St. Benedict thus gained the hearts of all for the love of their crucified Redeemer. Many renounced the world and offered their necks to the sweet yoke of Him who once said that His yoke was sweet and His burden light. Nevertheless, to the virtues of this great man the crown was wanting. Seven



beatitudes he had already acquired, only the eighth was wanting namely: "To suffer persecution for justice' sake;" but that also he was to obtain.

There lived in the neighborhood a priest named Florentius who could not bear to see the confidence placed by every one in our saint, and sought by every means to avert the people's hearts from him. Not succeeding in this, Florentius was greatly enraged, and becoming daily more embittered by jealousy resolved to kill the saint. In those times it was still a pious custom in the Church to send each other in token of holy love a loaf of blessed bread, called Eulogia. Florentius poisoned one of these loaves, and sent it to the holy man, who accepted it with thanks. St. Benedict immediately discovered what was wrong with it, and had it carried by a raven who daily received his food from the hand of the saint, to a place where it could not injure anybody. Florentius, however, continued to persecute the saint and his sons, which caused Benedict to leave that part of the country and settle on Mount Cassino, which is situated between Rome and Naples. Florentius was almost in a transport of joy when he perceived his ardent desire at last fulfilled; but his joy was of short duration. Suddenly his dwelling-house fell on him, burying him beneath the ruins.

St. Benedict found on Mount Cassino many remains of idolatry, as temples and altars, which were visited during the night by the inhabitants of the neighborhood. The saint, however, was determined to put an end to heathenism here. He tore down the temples and altars of the pagans, and in their places erected two chapels, one in honor of St. Martin of Tours, the other in honor of St. John the Baptist, adjacent to which he also built a large monastery. While this was done, he did not omit to open the eyes of the blind idolators, and to win them over to the only true faith.

Unceasingly he preached on the streets and even penetrated into their houses. Incessant were his prayers to God in their behalf. Gradually he succeeded in gaining them over. At first only some demanded holy baptism, but by and by they all flocked to him, earnestly beseeching him not to deprive them of the grace of this holy sacrament. But Satan, the father of falsehood and prince of darkness, could not endure to see himself defeated by our saint, and tried in every way to impede the conversion of these souls. He appeared to Benedict in the most hideous form, raising hellish shouts and yells. The other monks heard his horrible clamors, although they could not see the hideous forms. Benedict's zeal was by no means abated by these terrific



spectacles, but he continued to propagate the holy faith over the whole country.

Whilst the monastery was being erected, Satan appeared in the saint's cell, mocking and deriding him, saying that he had come to visit the workmen. The holy man immediately informed the monks by a messenger, saying: "Brethren, be on your guard, for in this hour Satan will come to you." Hardly had the messenger pronounced these words, when the wall which they were erecting, fell into ruins, killing a boy who already wore the habit of the order. The monks greatly afflicted, informed the saint of what had occurred, he ordered the dead boy to be brought to him. Since, however, not only all the limbs of the body were broken, but even all the bones of it crushed, they picked up the pieces of it and put them into a sheet, and thus carried them to the holy abbot. The saint had the body laid upon a mat in his cell, on which he was wont to say his prayers. Having ordered the monks to leave him, he locked himself up, and began to pray most fervently to God; when lo! even in that hour the boy was sent back to resume his work.

Even while the erection of the new monasteries was going on, and especially after they were completed, the number of monks rapidly increased. The saint was most vigilant that the rule which he had given them, should be observed. He prayed incessantly to God for light in order to guide his community in the spirit of prayer and mortification. God granted to him what he demanded, nay more, for he had the gift of understanding things hidden, as also to foresee future events.

One day while our saint was taking his evening repast, a monk, who was a lawyer's son, held the lamp for him, in whose heart arose, while performing this charitable act, thoughts of pride; for he thought to himself: "Who is he whom I have to serve at table, thus holding the lamp for him, and who am I, that I tolerate this willingly, and execute so degrading a work?" Benedict's spirit penetrated into the heart of the culprit, and soon rebuked him severely in the following terms: "Brother, cross thy breast! What art thou speaking in thy heart? Cross thy breast!" Seeing that his reproach was of no effect, he called the other monks, had the lamp taken from his hands, dismissed him from his occupation, and ordered that he should remain alone for that hour. The haughty monk became penitent by this chastisement, and afterwards humbly confessed his fault to his brethren who were greatly edified thereby.

The wicked and haughty king of the Goths, Totila, who in his arrogance acknowledged no superior on earth,



saw himself, nevertheless, compelled to bow before the spirit that dwelt in St. Benedict. He had been informed of the prophetic spirit of Benedict and not believing in this divine gift, he wished to try the holy man. He, therefore, came to Mount Cassino with his servant Riggo whom he ordered to vest in his royal robes and thus appear before the saint. The saint, however, as soon as he saw him approaching, addressed him at a distance: "My son! take off the robes you have on, they are not yours!" Riggo and all who accompanied him, were stricken with terror at these words. At the thought of having intended to deceive so holy a man, Riggo fell prostrate on the ground, after which he hastened to King Totila, informing him of all that had taken place. Totila struck with consternation, did not hesitate to come himself to the saint. He threw himself at his feet, and did not venture to rise, until the saint approached him, and taking him by the hand raised him up. St. Benedict now reproved the penitent king for his conduct, saying: "You perpetrate many crimes, you have perpetrated many already; forsake at last the ways of injustice. You will enter Rome, will cross the ocean, and will reign nine years to come, but in the tenth you will die!" What St. Benedict here predicted, was minutely fulfilled.

Not long afterwards when Totila was about to besiege Rome, the bishop of Canosa was with the saint, and remarked to him that the city would be destroyed by this king, and henceforward it would remain uninhabited. The saint, however, replied, that through these wandering tribes the city would not be destroyed, but that it would be molested by storms, hurricanes and earthquakes in such a manner as finally to dissolve itself. St. Gregory the Great, who afterwards wrote the life of our saint, remarks in relation to this: "The mystery of this prophecy is at hand; it is manifest to us all who witness the downfall of the city walls, churches and houses by storm, and the ruin of its edifices by age!"

A nobleman Theoprobos, who was an intimate friend of the holy man, one day entered his cell and found him weeping bitterly. For some time he remained at a distance, thinking that the saint was absorbed in prayer and was shedding tears as he was wont to do. Seeing, however, that Benedict was not engaged in prayer, he approached him, enquiring the reason of his affliction. Immediately the holy man replied: "This entire monastery which I have erected, and all that I with my brethren have brought in order, is by decree of the Almighty delivered up to the heathens; hardly could I obtain from His Majesty the sal-



vation of the souls (i. e. the lives) of the monks." Forty years after this prediction, the monastery was destroyed by the Longobardi who invaded it during the night, yet none of the monks were killed. Like all friends of God, St. Benedict had compassion on all who were afflicted, and an unshaken confidence in God. During a famine which at that time ravaged the country, the saint distributed among the poor all the food he possessed. Nothing was left save a little oil, when a subdeacon, named Agapitus, came asking for some. The saint ordered that the scanty remnant should immediately be given him. The steward of the monastery, however, refused it. When St. Benedict asked him whether he had given the oil to the poor subdeacon, the brother steward apologized, saying that if he had given it to him nothing would have remained for the monks. The saint inflamed with holy anger, ordered him to throw the oil-vessel out through the window. It was done. Outside of the window was a precipice, from which rocks and cliffs projected. Every one thought, that the vessel would be dashed into a thousand pieces. But it was well preserved, not even a drop of oil having been spilled. The saint then gave it to the petitioner. The monastery was now totally destitute of provisions. To whom should the monks have recourse in order to appease their hunger? The saint, however, was not in the least embarrassed concerning the imminent danger. They all had recourse to prayer. In the place where they prayed there was a large oil-vessel with a heavy cover. They prayed for a long time. When behold! the cover of the vessel began to rise, and the oil flowed forth in abundance. Now St. Benedict terminated his prayer and the oil ceased flowing. The saint availed himself of this wonderful event to admonish the distrustful steward to be more confident in the goodness of God. He also by his fervent prayers raised the dead to life. Thus he restored to life the son of a peasant who most ardently entreated him to do so.

Endowed with the gift of prophecy and the power of miracles, and ornamented with every virtue, particularly that of prayer and humility, our saint broadly diffused heavenly blessings, especially by the erection of so many monasteries, even in far distant countries in which his spirit continued to live among his children. Thousands of youths received in them a religious training and a thorough education. Popes, bishops, and a host of learned and pious men, went forth from these monasteries.

The saint had a dear and pious sister, named Scholastica, whose feast the Church celebrates on the 10th of February.



She together with other holy virgins led a most holy life in a convent about three miles distant from Mount Cassino. This sister God had taken to Himself. Benedict saw her soul soaring towards heaven in the shape of a dove. He was seized with a longing to be united to his beloved sister in heaven, there to praise God forever. He ardently desired death and foretold the hour of it to his children. On the 15th of March, 543, he ordered his grave to be opened. He was soon attacked by a fever and in defiance of all precautions taken in administering to him, the illness increased. On the 21st of March he ordered his monks to carry him into the oratory, where he received the holy Viaticum to strengthen him for the last combat, and standing upright, supported by his beloved children, with hands raised in prayer towards heaven, he yielded his pure soul into the hands of its Creator.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O almighty and eternal God, who (on this day) didst raise up to heaven thy blessed confessor Benedict, delivered from the prison of the flesh; grant, we beseech Thee, to Thy servants celebrating this festival, pardon of all their sins; that they who, with exulting minds, rejoice in his glory, may by his intercession with Thee, be also associated in his merits. Through &c.

LESSON. (*Ecclus.* l. 1. 1—14.) Behold a great Confessor, who in his life propped up the house, and in his days fortified the temple. By him also the height of the temple was founded, the double building, and the high walls of the temple. In his days the wells of water flowed out, and they were filled as the sea above measure. He took care of his nation, and delivered it from destruction. He prevailed to enlarge the city, and obtained glory in his conversation with the people; and enlarged the entrance of the house, and the court. He shone in his days as the morning star in the midst of a cloud, and as the moon at full; and as the sun when it shineth, so did he shine in the temple of God; and as the rainbow giveth light in the bright clouds, and as the flower of roses in



the days of spring, and as the lilies that are on the brink of the water, and as the sweet smelling frankincense in the time of summer; as a bright fire, and frankincense burning in the fire. As a massy vessel of gold, adorned with every precious stone; as an olive-tree budding forth, and a cypress tree rearing itself on high, when he put on the robe of glory, and was clothed with the perfection of power. When he went up to the holy altar, he honoured the vesture of holiness. And when he took the portions out of the hands of the priests, and he himself stood by the altar. And about him was the ring of his brethren: as the cedar planted in mount Libanus, and as branches of palm tree, so they stood round about him and all the sons of Aaron in their glory.

EXPLANATION. What is said in this epistle of the high-priest Simon, the Church applies to St. Benedict. As Simon completed the temple of Jerusalem, so this great founder of the order laid the corner-stone, and, as it were, finished the temple, the spiritual temple of God in the hearts of the nations of the Occident, and we may well say that as many church-bells as resounded from the towers in the middle ages throughout civilized Europe so many witnesses there are as proofs of the temples which this great saint and his children have erected. A stream of grace flowed through this saint so that a new ocean of blessings covered the earth, and innumerable saints were given to heaven. He indeed saved Europe from perdition, having, like a mother, given birth to Christianity in Europe. His fame spread far beyond the boundaries of Europe. Thus he has greatly added to the glory of the Church of God. Could the world present to us a miracle of nature by having the sun appear whilst the stars of the firmament shine, it would be the picture of this great Patriarch among his children in heaven.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xix. 27—29.) AT THAT TIME, Peter said to Jesus: Behold, we have left all things, and have followed thee: what, therefore, shall we have? And Jesus said to them: Amen I say to you, that you who have followed me, in the regeneration, when



the Son of man shall sit on the seat of his majesty, you also shall sit on twelve seats judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall possess life everlasting.

*What did Jesus mean by regeneration?*

The resurrection of the dead on the Last Day, for then the whole man will be renewed and regenerated, so to speak, body and soul. This renewal and regeneration will be a glorious one for the pious and just, but a fearful one for the wicked.

*What is meant by the sitting on twelve thrones, and judging the twelve tribes of Israel?*

That the apostles and all Christians who like the apostles have left all for Christ's sake, following the Saviour in poverty, despising and crucifying their flesh, shall take part in the glory of Christ on the Last Day; they will appear in magnificence with Him, and with Him will judge and condemn the wicked.

*Does Jesus desire us to leave father and mother?*

Christ who commands us to honor our parents, does not wish us to leave our father and mother, or relations in their necessities, or to withhold our assistance, when they are in need of it. He only requires that we should not allow ourselves to be prevented by them from leading a good life, and that in case we find ourselves called by God to a more perfect life, for instance, to enter a religious community, we should be prepared to leave everything, even father and mother, to correspond to that call. Our reward will be an hundredfold, for Christ Himself will then take the place of father and mother, and give unto us the richest measure of purest joy here and in heaven.





## INSTRUCTION ON THE FESTIVAL OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

(*March 25.*)



THE Church on this day celebrates the commemoration of the day, ever memorable in the Book of Life, upon which the holy, angelically pure Virgin Mary received the glorious announcement that she was chosen to be the Mother of the Redeemer.

The Church in the Introit exclaims: All the rich among the people shall entreat thy countenance: after her shall virgins be brought to the King: her neighbors shall be brought to thee in gladness and rejoicing. (*Ps. xliv.*) My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the King. Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who wast pleased that Thy Word, at the message of an angel, should take flesh in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary: grant us Thy suppliants, that we who believe her to be truly the Mother of God may be assisted by her intercession with Thee. Thro'. &c.

*(The Lesson and Explanation as on Ember-Wednesday in Advent.)*

GOSPEL. (*Luke i. 26—38.*) AT THAT TIME, the Angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And the Angel being come in, said unto her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women. Who having heard, was troubled at his saying, and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be. And the Angel said to her: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God: Behold, thou shalt conceive





in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father: and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end. And Mary said to the Angel: How shall this be done, because I know not man? And the Angel answering, said to her: The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow



thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And behold, thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren: because no word shall be impossible with God. And Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word.

*Why does the Evangelist so minutely detail the announcement of the Incarnation?*

That we may clearly impress upon our mind, believe in, and meditate upon the mystery of the Incarnation, upon which depends our eternal salvation.

*Why was an angel sent to Mary?*

To announce to her that it was God's will that His divine Son, in order to redeem the human race by His sufferings and death, should take human nature from her, and because the human race, redeemed by Christ, was to occupy the place made vacant by the fallen angels.

*Was the Incarnation necessary for our redemption?*

Yes; for as God, Christ could not suffer; without an infinitely meritorious suffering a sufficient satisfaction could not have been rendered to God, had not the Son of God humiliated Himself before His heavenly Father, and suffered: this could only be effected by the Incarnation. This shows the enormity of sin, for which no man however pure, no, not even an angel, but only a God-Man could atone.

*Why did God require Mary's consent for the Incarnation of His Son?*

To show us that God forces no one to good, much less to evil; that we might learn that our good intention and free assent are necessary even to good works, if we wish them to be meritorious. Venerable Bede says: that because of her consent God imparted to Mary all, even the greatest graces, greater than all creatures, angels as well as men, ever merited.

*Why was Mary troubled at the angel's message?*

On account of her humility and modesty. She was so humble that she regarded herself as the least of all



creatures, and could not comprehend how such an honor could be hers. She was so modest, and loved virginal purity so much that the presence of the angel and his message troubled her. From this all maidens should see that their loveliest adornments and most necessary virtues are modesty, humility and love of purity, which Mary so valued that she would not lose them even to become the Mother of God.

*What is meant by the throne of David?*

The kingdom of Christ, of which David's government was a representation. (*Ps. cxxxi.*)

*Why is David called the father of Christ?*

Because Mary descended from the house of David, and, therefore, David according to nature was the forefather of Christ.

*Who was the real father of Christ?*

To answer this properly, we must observe that in Christ there are two natures, the divine and the human. According to His human nature He had indeed a mother, but no father, for Joseph was only His foster-father; according to His divine nature He had no mother, but only a father, the Heavenly Father.

*How, then, was Christ conceived?*

By the overshadowing and power of the Holy Ghost, who by His divine omnipotence effected the conception of Him whom Mary was to bring forth.

*How should we be encouraged by the words: No word shall be impossible with God?*

We should be encouraged to a great confidence in God, who can readily assist us in the most difficult circumstances, even when help seems impossible, and He will aid us, if it is beneficial, and if we ask Him. These words, moreover, admonish us to a firm faith which cannot be shaken by the most incomprehensible mystery in matters of faith.

*Why does Mary call herself the handmaid of the Lord?*

From humility, which next to her maidenly modesty was her most remarkable virtue, which causes St. Bernard to say: "By her purity she pleased God, and by her humility she conceived Him."



## EXPLANATION OF THE "HAIL MARY" OR THE ANGELIC SALUTATION.

*Why is the "Hail Mary" called the Angelic Salutation?*

**B**ECAUSE it commences with the words addressed to Mary by the Archangel Gabriel, when he brought her the message that she was to be the Mother of God.

*Of what does the Hail Mary consist?*

Of the words of the Archangel Gabriel; of St. Elizabeth's salutation, when she was visited by Mary; and of words added by the Catholic Church.

*What words did the angel say to Mary?*

Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou amongst women!

*What is meant by these words?*

The word Hail, that is, Salutation to thee! Peace with thee! or, Joy to thee! expresses the reverence which the angel had for the Blessed Virgin, and which we should also cherish. The words: full of grace remind us that God bestowed more graces upon the Blessed Virgin than upon all men and angels together. We should for this reason always pray with confidence to her to obtain for us, by her powerful intercession, those graces which are most necessary for our salvation. By the words: the Lord is with thee, the angel intended to express, that the Lord was with this maiden not only in His reality, presence, and omnipotence as with all men, not only in His grace as with the just, but with the greatest and most extraordinary grace, love and familiarity. St. Augustine observes: "The angel wished to say: The Lord is with thee more than with me; the Lord is with thee, so that He may be in thy heart, in thy body, may fill thy spirit, may fill thy flesh." "Could God raise her higher!" St. Bernard here exclaims. Ah, that the Lord might be with us also, and Mary by her intercession obtain graces for us! Finally, the words: Blessed art thou amongst women, mean: thou art the happiest of women, for thou of all thy sex art chosen to be the Mother of God, at the same time Mother and Maid. How much is contained in the salutation which one of the highest spirits surrounding the throne of God, addressed to Mary, and how much it behooves us to love and daily salute Mary, our most tender Mother!



*What were the words used by St. Elizabeth, and what is their signification?*

Elizabeth repeated the words of the angel: Blessed art thou amongst women, adding "and blessed is the fruit of thy womb," which signified that Jesus should be glorified, because through Him God would bestow all spiritual and heavenly blessings upon us.

*Which are the words added by the Church?*

They are: "Jesus", who is the fruit of her womb, by which she wishes us to offer this prayer to God in the name of Christ; and then she adds the invocation to Mary: Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

*What do these words mean?*

When we say Holy Mary, we mean to express that Mary is God's holy and wonderful work, Daughter of the Heavenly Father, Mother of the Son, and Bride of the Holy Ghost, and has all her sanctity, beauty, and that great veneration from the fruit of her womb, Jesus Christ. The glorious title of Mother of God is given her, because Mary bore not an ordinary man, but Jesus Christ who is both God and Man. Therefore from her was born the Son of God, the incarnate God, not a man who appeared like God, but God in flesh. She is, then, really and truly the Mother of God, our Lord's Mother. The Fathers who had assembled in the holy Council of Chalcedon, to refute Nestorius, who sought to deprive Mary of the title of Mother of God, called her "Holy Mary, Mother of God." Of herself Mary is not holy, and cannot of herself help us, therefore we say: pray for us, by which we ask for her powerful intercession; and conscious of our poverty and sinfulness, call ourselves poor sinners, who turn to Mary, the Mother of mercy, because we feel ourselves too unworthy to pray to Christ Himself, and, therefore, entreat this loving mother to obtain for us amendment of life, remission of sin, consolation in affliction, remedy in sickness, assistance in need, increase of grace, preservation, perseverance, and the crown; and may Mary pray for us now and at the hour of our death. Now, that is, while the divine mercy is given us, and especially in the hour of death, when the weapons for battle against the enemy fall from our hands, and the evil one tempts us the more violently, because he knows that his time is short, (*Apoc. xii. 12.*) in that hour on which depends our eternal welfare or



grief. By the word Amen we affirm that we remain true venerators of the Virgin Mother of God, and at all times expect grace from God through her intercession. "Yes," says St. Bernard, "let us venerate Mary as sincerely, heartily, and confidently as we can, for such is His will who desired that we should have all (salvation and redemption in Christ) through Mary." The Son will assuredly hear the Mother, and the Father the Son. Let us, then, strive to rise by her to Him who by her came down to us!

Through thee, who hast found grace with God, Mother of life! Mother of salvation! we have access to the Son, who accepts us from thee, who was given us by thee — to Jesus Christ, eternally blessed.

## ON THE "ANGELUS DOMINI," THE ANGEL OF THE LORD.

*Who introduced the angelic salutation into the Catholic Church?*

**P**OPE Urban II., who at the Council of Clermont, France, in 1095, ordered that the bells be rung every day in the morning, at noon, and in the evening, and that at each time the angelic salutation be repeated. His special intention was to obtain Mary's protection for the crusades of the eleventh century, which had for their object the rescuing of the holy Sepulchre from the hands of the infidels. These wars are now ended, but the life of the whole Church, of every Christian, is a crusade against sin and temptation. We always need Mary's protection; and, therefore, the custom of repeating the salutation is still retained in the Church. Formerly at the ringing of the Angelus, all the faithful fell on their knees, and even now pious Catholics do the same. St. Charles Borromeo, an archbishop, did not hesitate to kneel in the open street and repeat the angelic salutation.

*Of what does the "Angelus Domini" consist?*

It consists of three Hail Marys: before the first is said: The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary, and she conceived of the Holy Ghost; before the second: Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto me according to thy word; before the third: and the word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us.



*Why and how often is the "Angelus Domini" said?*

It is said in order to remind us of Christ's Incarnation and in thanks for it; to ask the Blessed Virgin's maternal protection against all enemies visible and invisible; to recollect at least three times in the day, morning, noon and evening, like David, to give praise to God, and take a little time expressly for prayer, for which purpose the bells are rung three times a day.

*How should we say the "Angelus Domini?"*

With respect, that is, slowly and kneeling (except on Saturday evenings and Sundays, and during the time of Easter, when it is said standing); contritely, since Christ became man because of our sins; devoutly, that is, heart and lips should be in accord.

### SALUTATION TO MARY.

Hail Mary, full of grace! I rejoice and congratulate thee, because thou wert chosen to be the Mother of the Most High and Queen of heaven and earth. With thee is the Father who from all eternity begot Him whom thou didst bear; with thee is the Son whom thou didst carry in thy virginal womb; with thee is the Holy Ghost, overshadowed by whose power thou didst become the Mother of God. Thou art blessed amongst women, thou art the joy of heaven and the ornament of the Church of God, pray for us now and at the hour of our death. Amen.





## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF THE SEVEN DOLORS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

[Friday before Palm Sunday.]



HIS festival is thus named, because the various sufferings Mary endured during her whole life may be placed under seven heads: 1. Her Son's circumcision. 2. The flight into Egypt. 3. The three days He was lost. 4. When she saw Him carrying His cross. 5. His death. 6. The descent from the cross. 7. His burial. As a continual remembrance of these sorrows, the Church ordered this festival, and for this reason the Dolorous Mother is represented with one, sometimes with seven swords piercing her heart.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, at whose passion, according to the prophecy of Simeon, a sword of grief pierced through the most sweet soul of Thy glorious Virgin Mother Mary: mercifully grant that we who celebrate the memory of her dolors may obtain the happy effect of Thy passion. Who liveth &c.

LESSON. (*Judith* xiii. 22—25.) THE Lord hath blessed thee by his power, because by thee he hath brought our enemies to naught. Blessed art thou, O daughter, by the Lord the most High God, above all women upon the earth. Blessed be the Lord who made heaven and earth, because he hath so magnified thy name this day, that thy praise shall not depart out of the mouth of men, who shall be mindful of the power of the Lord for ever; for that thou hast not spared thy life by reason of the distress and tribulation of thy people, but hast prevented our ruin in the presence of our God.

GOSPEL. (*John* xix. 25—27.) AT THAT TIME, there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen. When Jesus therefore had seen his mother and the



disciple standing, whom he loved, he saith to his mother: Woman, behold thy son. After that, he saith to the disciple: Behold thy mother. And from that hour the disciple took her to his own.

*(An indulgence of one hundred days is obtained by repeating with contrition and devotion the following hymn.)*

## STABAT MATER.

At the Cross her station keeping,  
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,  
Close to Jesus to the last.  
Through her heart His sorrow sharing,  
All His bitter anguish bearing,  
Now at length the sword had passed.

Oh! how sad and sore distress'd  
Was that Mother highly blest  
Of the sole-begotten One!  
Christ above in torment hangs;  
She beneath beholds the pangs  
Of her dying glorious Son.

Is there one who would not weep,  
Whelm'd in miseries so deep  
Christ's dear Mother to behold?  
Can the human heart refrain  
From partaking in her pain,  
In that Mother's pain untold?

Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,  
She beheld her tender Child  
All with bloody scourges rent.  
For the sins of His own nation,  
Saw Him hang in desolation,  
Till His spirit forth He sent.

O thou Mother! fount of love!  
Touch my spirit from above,  
Make my heart with thine accord:  
Make me feel as thou hast felt;  
Make my soul to glow and melt  
With the love of Christ my Lord.

Holy Mother! pierce me through,  
In my heart each wound renew  
Of my Saviour crucified.  
Let me share with thee His pain,  
Who for all my sins was slain,  
Who for me in torments died.

Let me mingle tears with thee,  
Mourning Him who mourned for me,  
All the days that I may live:  
By the Cross with thee to stay;  
There with thee to weep and pray,  
Is all I ask of thee to give.

Virgin of all virgins best,  
Listen to my fond request:  
Let me share thy grief divine,  
Let me, to my latest breath,  
In my body bear the death  
Of that dying Son of thine.

Wounded with His every wound,  
Steep my soul till it hath swooned  
In His very blood away;  
Be to me, O Virgin, nigh,  
Lest in flames I burn and die,  
In His awful Judgment-day.

Christ, when Thou shalt call me hence,  
Be Thy Mother my defence,  
Be Thy Cross my victory;  
While my body here decays,  
May my soul Thy goodness praise,  
Safe in Paradise with Thee.



## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. GEORGE, MARTYR.

[April 23.]



**S**T. GEORGE was born of an eminent family in Cappadocia, and after his father's death accompanied his mother to Palestine, her native country, where she had considerable property. A Christian from his youth, St. George walked faithfully in accordance with the requirements of the Christian law. When a young man, he accepted a military position in the army under the Emperor Dioclesian, who appointed him colonel, not knowing he was a Christian; but when Dioclesian, who was the great enemy of the Christians, published his cruel edict of persecution, George resigned his position and made the emperor an earnest exposition of the cruelty and absurdity of his edict. Dioclesian incensed at this, caused him to be imprisoned, and sought by the most flattering offers to lure him from the faith. But the saint replied: "I despise thy promises, I fear not thy threats. Thy empire is not lasting, thy power is weak and avails but little, like everything which fortune promises. It were better for you, O emperor, if you were to confess the true God, and strive to gain the heavenly kingdom." Enraged at these words, the emperor caused a large stone to be hung around the saint's neck, and to be again imprisoned. On the following day the saint was again brought before the tribunal, and as he remained firm in the Christian faith, he was bound to a wheel and turned over pointed knives and sharp daggers, which rent his body; but in the midst of the torture he heard a heavenly voice say: "Lay aside all fear, George, for I am with thee," and there appeared to him a man of great stature who took him by the hand, embraced him, and strengthened him for the struggle. George remained unshaken, and his noble example converted many pagans whom the emperor caused to be put to death.

When the emperor saw that he could not break the courage of the saint, he sought once more by flattering promises to move him to idolatry. "If it pleases you, then," said the saint, "let us go into the temple and see the gods whom you so venerate." The emperor, delighted with this concession, went at once with him and a great number of



people to the temple. St. George approaching the god Apollo, said: "You desire an offering which belongs only to God?" and as he spoke, he made the sign of the cross on the image. Hardly was this done, than the devil who possessed it, cried out: "I am not God! I am not God! There is no God but He whom you adore!" "Then why," demanded George, "can you not stand in my presence, and that of other worshippers of the true God?" At these words the evil spirits raised a fearful cry, and all the idols fell to the ground. The idolatrous priests and people burst into the greatest fury, and wished to tear the saint to pieces, and the emperor was obliged to bring George away immediately and had him beheaded. St. George was highly venerated in the East and West. The great national council, held at Oxford, in 1222, commanded his feast to be kept a holiday of the lesser rank throughout all England. He is the special patron of military men, who by his intercession have often gained wonderful assistance.

The Introit of the Mass reads: Thou hast protected me, O God, from the assembly of the malignant, Alleluia: from the multitude of the workers of iniquity, Alleluia, Alleluia. Hear, O God, my prayer when I make supplication to Thee: deliver my soul from the fear of the enemy. (*Ps. lxxiii. 1, 3.*) Glory &c.

*Prayer of the Church as on the Feast of St. Blase, Febr. 3rd.*

*Lesson. (Wisd. v. 1—5.) See Feast of the Apostles Philip and James, May 1st.*

GOSPEL. (*John xv, 1—7.*) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he will take away: and every one that beareth fruit, he will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now you are clean by reason of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing. If any one abide not in me, he shall be





cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire, and he burneth. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask whatever you will, and it shall be done unto you.

**EXPLANATION.** Christ, the God-Man, our Redeemer, compares Himself in a most instructive manner to a vine.



His Father, like a husbandman, when sending Him down to earth to be born of the Virgin Mary, planted Him in the earth. The vine is Christ, the branches are the disciples, and all those who by baptism have been received into the holy Church, and are growing as living branches from Christ. As the branches are united with the vine and by this union obtain sap, strength and nourishment, that they can bear leaves, blossoms and fruit, so are true, faithful Christians united in faith and love with Christ, and as long as they remain with Him, receive from Him the grace to leaf out, to blossom with holy virtues and bear the fruit of good works. This especially takes place, as the Fathers of the Church remark, by means of holy Communion, wherein the soul becomes one with Jesus, and receives from Him, as it were, the spiritual sap which enables them to bear the fruits of a pious, devout life. If the branch is broken from the vine, it withers and is only fit to be burned; so the soul of man without Jesus becomes withered, that is, it loses the spiritual life, the grace, the love, the strength to do good, and can no longer bring forth the fruit of good works and of holy virtues. As the husbandman cuts the withered branches from the vine, so the Heavenly Husbandman separates from Christ those who practice no virtues and accomplish no good works; He takes from them Christ's grace and spirit, and after death deprives them of eternal communion with Him. As the living branches are kept clear by the husbandman from water-shoots, superfluous leaves, useless blossoms and vermin, that they may bear better and more abundant fruit, so the Heavenly Husbandman keeps the faithful who are united in faith and love with Christ, clear from all earthly affections, by afflictions, temptations, persecutions, by poverty and all kinds of trials, by remorse of conscience, by fear, which He secretly imparts to them, especially by His holy word, which, as the apostle says, is living and effectual, and more piercing than any two-edged sword: and reaching unto the division of the soul and the spirit, of the joints also and the marrow. (*Heb. iv. 12.*)

Remain always, Christian soul, by faith and love, and a pious active life, a living branch of the vine, Christ, in whom you were grafted in holy Baptism, whom you have so often received in holy Communion. Woe to you, if by a lukewarm, vicious life you separate from Christ; you will then wither away, and be given up to be eternally burned!

**SUPPLICATION.** O Jesus, dispenser of life! do not suffer me to grow cold in love, do not permit



faith to die in me, do not allow me to be separated from Thee, and be lost. Rather assist me by Thy grace, that I may bring forth fruits of virtue and good works.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. PAUL OF THE CROSS.

*(April 28.)*



PAUL of the Cross was born in the year 1694, near Genoa, of noble parents. Having scarcely attained the use of reason he commenced to meditate at length on the sufferings of the crucified Redeemer; he mortified his flesh by night watches, discipline, fasting, and on Fridays drinking vinegar mixed with gall.

Inflamed with the desire of becoming a martyr he joined the army which was raised at Venice to fight against the Turks, but learning, before a full year, the will of God, he laid down arms and enrolled a superior militia which was to be a bulwark of the Church, a means of eternal salvation for souls.

Having returned to his country, he declined to form an alliance which his friends wished him to make, also to receive his inheritance, and desired by a life of self-abnegation to follow his crucified Master, and this desire prompted him to ask from his bishop a rough habit. Soon afterwards he went to Rome where he studied theology, and by the command of Pope Benedict XIII. was ordained priest. The pope gave him permission to receive associates, and Paul then left Rome and went to Monte Argentaro, where the Blessed Virgin had previously invited him to go, after showing him a dress of black color decorated with the insignia of the Passion of her Son. Here Paul founded the new congregation of the Passionists whose members in a short time became very numerous. He also founded a convent for nuns who were to meditate on the great love of Christ shown in His passion.

Through his inexhaustible zeal and preaching he converted innumerable sinners, even the most hardened; he also brought many who had fallen into heresy back to the true faith. His sermons on the passion of our Lord were





ST. PAUL OF THE CROSS.

so touching that his hearers were always moved to tears, and the hearts of the most hardened sinners were softened and brought to repentance. In the heart of Paul the fire of divine love burned so ardently that often it made itself visible on his breast. He was frequently wrapt in ecstasy during which his body was raised from the ground, and his countenance shone with heavenly light; he also had the gift of prophecy and of tongues; saw the interior of man;



had power over the evil spirits and the elements, and cured diseases. He died at Rome in the year 1775. Pope Pius IX. declared his beatification, and later, on account of other miracles, canonized him.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH** O Lord Jesus Christ, who didst endow St. Paul with singular charity to preach the mystery of the Cross, and didst wish that a new order should flourish in the Church through him: grant us by his intercession, that being ever mindful of Thy Passion on earth, we may merit to attain its fruit in heaven. Who liveth &c.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF SS. PHILIP AND JAMES, APOSTLES.

[May 1.]



**P**HILIP, born at Bethsaida, was one of the first disciples of Jesus, and was chosen one of the apostles. Burning with the fire of divine love, he sought to gain disciples for our Lord, and brought Him Nathanael, and a little before our Saviour's passion certain Gentiles, desirous to see Christ, made their first address to Philip, and by him obtained that favor. From many passages of the gospel, we see that Philip was especially dear to our Saviour. After our Lord's Ascension Philip, having traveled through many countries, at last resorted to both Phrygias, where he labored with the greatest success for the propagation of Christianity, which so exasperated the idolatrous priests, that when he was eighty years old, they seized the venerable man, scourged, crucified, and finally stoned him. — We have especially to learn from the life of St. Philip that, having once found the truth for ourselves, we must labor to bring others to God.

St. James, the Apostle, who on account of his extraordinary sanctity was called by the Jews the Just man, was a brother of Judas Thaddæus and son of Cleophas, whose pious wife, Mary, was sister or aunt of the Mother of Jesus. In the second year of Christ's ministry James and Judas were chosen apostles. St. James was greatly esteemed by the apostles, and was made the first bishop of Jerusalem.



In this office he lived in constant solitude, never drank wine, nor permitted his hair to be cut; fasted continually on bread and water; and prayed so constantly, kneeling, with his head bent to the floor, that the skin of his knees became as tough as the skin of a camel. He worked many miracles, converted many eminent Jews to the faith, and on account of his piety and generosity was held in such respect by Jews and Gentiles, that they would fall on their knees before him, and kiss his garments. The Jewish priests, therefore, tried to induce him to abandon the faith, hoping thus to extinguish Christianity in Jerusalem. With hypocritical faces they prayed him to give his judgment of Christ; in answer to their request, he ascended to an elevated position in the temple, and, to their amazement, publicly pronounced Christ to be the promised Messiah and true Son of God, in whom we must all believe. Some of the people were converted by his words; but his hypocritical enemies at once rushed upon the saint, and threw him to the ground. He was not immediately killed, but praying for his enemies, they stoned him, and one man, filled with fiendish rage, struck him on the head with a fuller's rod and killed him.

The Introit is: In the day of their tribulation they cried to Thee, O Lord, and Thou heardst them from heaven, Alleluia, Alleluia. (ii *Esdras* ix.) Rejoice in the Lord, ye just: praise becometh the upright. (*Ps.* xxxii.) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O Lord, who dost gladden us by the yearly solemnity of Philip and James, Thy apostles: grant, we beseech Thee, that as we rejoice in their merits, so we may be instructed by their examples. Thro'. &c.

LESSON. (*Wisd.* v. 1—5.) THE just shall stand with great constancy against those that have afflicted them, and taken away their labors. These seeing it, shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the suddenness of their unexpected salvation, saying within themselves, repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit: These are they whom we had some time in derision, and for a parable of reproach. We fools esteemed their life madness, and their end without honor. Behold, how they are



numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints.

This lesson is so clear that it requires no explanation. We are to consider and apply it to ourselves, and look to it that we do not have to suffer like these impious ones.

GOSPEL. (*John* xiv. 1—13.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: Let not your hearts be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many mansions. If not, I would have told you: that I go to prepare a place for you. And if I shall go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will take you to myself, that where I am you also may be. And whither I go you know, and the way you know. Thomas saith to him: Lord, we know not whither thou goest: and how can we know the way? Jesus saith to him: I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me. If you had known me, you would without doubt have known my Father also: and from henceforth you shall know him, and you have seen him. Philip saith to him: Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us. Jesus saith to him: So long a time have I been with you, and have you not known me? Philip, he that seeth me, seeth the Father also. How sayest thou: Show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak to you, I speak not of myself. But the Father who abideth in me, he doth the works. Believe you not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? Otherwise, believe for the very works' sake. Amen, amen I say to you, he that believeth in me, the works that I do, he also shall do, and greater than these shall he do. Because I go to the Father: and whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, that will I do.



*Why did Jesus say to his disciples, Let not your hearts be troubled?*

He said this to comfort them in advance, because He foresaw that they, on account of their great love for Him, would be greatly afflicted by His ignominious sufferings and their own oppressions.

Learn from this that God consoles those who suffer persecution for His sake.

*Why did He say: You believe in God, believe also in me?*

He wished to impress upon them that if they believed God could assist them in their trials and persecutions, they should believe that Christ could do the same, for He is true God and perfectly equal in all things to His Father.

*What is meant by the many mansions in heaven?*

The different degrees of reward, of joy, and of glory, which each and every one in heaven will receive according to his merits.

*How did Christ prepare a place in heaven for us?*

By his sufferings, His death, His resurrection and ascension He has opened the entrance to heaven and obtained for us eternal joys.

*When did Christ take His disciples to Himself?*

At their happy death in this world. He will also one day take us to Himself, if we live and die His true disciples.

*How is Christ the way, the truth, and the life?*

Christ is the way by His holy doctrine and example; He is the truth by the fulfilment of all prophecies, by His mysteries, His promises and warnings, His gospel and His Church; He is the life, because by His death He has obtained for us the life of grace and glory. St. Bernard says: "We follow Thee, O Lord, because Thou art the way, the truth, and the life; the way of example, the truth in promise, the life in reward." And St. Hilary: "Christ leads us not falsely, for He is the way; He deceives us not, for He is the truth; and deserts us not in the terror of death, for He is the life."



*Did not the apostles know Christ?*

They certainly knew Him to be the Son of God, as Peter in the name of all affirmed, but they had only very vague ideas about the Three Persons of the Most Holy Trinity, which mystery they had yet to learn perfectly from the Holy Ghost. — How many there are among Christians who possess no true knowledge of their faith, do not try to increase in its knowledge, although it is especially in these times, when the true faith is so strongly attacked by heretics and infidels, that we should be well grounded in it. Seek, then, to know the truth, by invoking the Holy Ghost, reading good books, and hearing instructions and sermons on Christian doctrine, that you may not be infected and led away by insinuating errors.

*Why did Christ say to Philip: He that seeth me, seeth the Father also?*

Because Christ, in nature and essence, is perfectly equal to His Father, although different in person. Therefore Christ adds that He is in the Father, and the Father in Him.

*Why should the disciples believe for the works' sake?*

Because Christ performed miracles which no man could perform, therefore God must be in Him. (*John* iii. 2.)

*How is it that those who believe in Christ, work even greater miracles?*

St. Augustine says, because Christ works through them still greater miracles than He performed upon earth Himself.

PRAYER TO ST. PHILIP. O St. Philip! chosen disciple of the Lord, thou who didst bring Nathanael to learn the mysteries of faith, didst require to see the Heavenly Father, didst preach most zealously Christ Jesus, didst permit thyself to be nailed to the cross and willingly slain for love of Him: obtain for me and all men, I beseech thee, the grace zealously to lead others to good, greatly to desire God and His truth, and in the hope of the eternal, happy vision of God, patiently to endure the sufferings and difficulties of life.

PRAYER TO ST. JAMES. O St. James! who didst live so temperately and rigorously, didst pray so



zealously and constantly, even for thy enemies: obtain for us, I beseech thee, from thy Lord and Master, that, like thee, we may live temperately and penitently, adoring God in spirit and truth, and serving Him humbly and reverently. Implore for us the light of the Holy Ghost by which thou didst write thy epistle, that we may follow thy doctrines, diligently strive to do good works, and especially, like thee, love and pray for our enemies.

### SHORT LESSONS FROM THE EPISTLE OF ST. JAMES.

All adversities of this life are to be regarded as graces from God, and to be borne with cheerfulness. (i.)

Faith without works is dead, and does not avail to salvation. (ii.)

For him who does not control his tongue, his religion is vain. (iii.)

All our misfortunes come from our immoderate and ungoverned passions. (iv.)

The prayer of the just man avails much with God, and is a great consolation in affliction. (v.)

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FESTIVAL OF THE FINDING OF THE HOLY CROSS.

(May 3.)



*Why is this day thus called?*

BECAUSE on this day the Catholic Church solemnly commemorates the finding of the true Cross of our Lord in the year 326 by St. Helena, mother of the Emperor Constantine.

*Where was the Cross before this discovery?*

In the city of Jerusalem, buried under ruins, and over it was built a temple of the goddess Venus. The Emperor Adrian who lived two hundred years before Helena, had



undertaken not only to profane the sacred places of our Lord's death and burial, but to conceal all traces of them.

*How did St. Helena find the Cross?*

When her son, the Emperor Constantine, had conquered his enemy, the cruel Maxentius, by the aid of the Holy Cross which he saw in the heavens, radiant and glorious, with the inscription: "IN THIS SIGN CONQUER!" he became animated with such veneration for the Cross, that he commanded it to be venerated throughout the Roman Empire, and from that time forward forbade any one to be crucified. He also resolved to build a magnificent church in Jerusalem in honor of the Holy Cross. His mother, the Empress Helena, in her very advanced age went herself to the Holy Land, and undertook, with the aid of St. Macarius, Bishop of Jerusalem, to find the sacred burial-place of Christ. After clearing the spot of the rubbish, she was successful in finding the vault of the Holy Sepulchre. Near to it they found three crosses, the nails, and the inscription which had been placed over the Cross. In order to know which was the true Cross, St. Macarius full of faith fervently prayed to God, and caused a woman, who was mortally ill, to be touched with the three crosses. The first two had no effect, but when touched by the third, she rose up in perfect health. Thus they received the assurance that the true Cross was found. Helena sent one part of the Cross and the nails to her son at Constantinople; another part, with the inscription, she presented to a church at Rome, which now bears the name of the Church of the Holy Cross; but the largest part of it she caused to be set in silver, and given to the Bishop of Jerusalem, to be preserved for after ages. When Constantine received the precious gift, he wrote to Macarius empowering him to build upon the spot, where our Saviour rose from the dead, a church which should exceed in splendor anything that had ever before been seen. This church was built, and under the name of the Holy Sepulchre was dedicated in the year 335. The principal part of the Holy Cross was some time after brought to Rome, and has been cut into small pieces and distributed over almost the whole world to be venerated as parts of the instrument of Redemption.

THE CHURCH'S SALUTATION TO THE HOLY CROSS.

O glorious and venerable Cross! O most precious wood! O wonderful sign by which sin, the devil and



hell were conquered, and the world redeemed by Jesus Christ! Great art thou above all the trees of the cedars of the forest, for on thee hung the Life of the world! On thee Christ triumphed and by His death conquered death forever. Alleluia.

We adore Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, and bless Thee, because by Thy Holy Cross thou hast redeemed the world.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who, in the miraculous discovery of the Holy Cross, wast pleased to renew the wonders of Thy passion: grant, that by the ransom paid on that saving wood, we may find help for the obtaining of life eternal. Who livest &c.

*Epistle (Phil. ii. 5—11.) as on Palm-Sunday.*

GOSPEL. (*John iii. 1—15.*) AT THAT TIME, there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night, and said to him: Rabbi, we know that thou art come a teacher from God: for no man can do these signs which thou dost, unless God be with him. Jesus answered, and said to him: Amen, amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith to him: How can a man be born again, when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born again? Jesus answered: Amen, amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh: and that which is born of the spirit, is spirit. Wonder not that I said to thee, you must be born again. The Spirit breatheth where he will: and thou hearest his voice, but thou knowest not whence he cometh, nor whither he goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered, and said to him: How



can these things be done? Jesus answered, and said to him: Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things? Amen, amen I say to thee, that we speak what we know, and we testify what we have seen, and you receive not our testimony. If I have spoken to you earthly things, and you believe not; how will you believe if I shall speak to you heavenly things? And no man hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended from heaven, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him may not perish, but may have life everlasting.

SHORT EXPLANATION. Jesus in this gospel speaks of the regeneration of our souls, which depends upon faith in the Son of God, and especially in His death of reconciliation on the cross. In this regeneration the Holy Ghost, by His grace, effects that in us which Christ won for us on the cross. Let us not, then, be led away by the seducing words of this world and its followers from faith in Christ, the Son of God, but, penetrated and renewed by His spirit, become worthy to enter the kingdom of heaven.

### PRAYER OF THE CHURCH FOR FAVORABLE WEATHER.

*From this day until the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, (Sept. 14th.) in many parochial churches there are prayers said and a blessing given after Mass, in order to obtain favorable weather. In some churches this is done from St. Mark's day until the end of harvest-time.*

The priest standing in the middle of the Altar, says:

V. Give us peace, O Lord, in our days.

R. Because there is none other who fights for us but Thou.

V. Peace be in Thy strength,

R. And plenty in Thy towers.

### LET US PRAY!

O God, from whom proceed all holy desires, all right counsels and all just works, give to Thy servants that peace which the world cannot give: that our hearts being disposed to keep Thy commandments,



and the fear of enemies being removed, the times through Thy protection may be peaceable. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

V. From lightning and tempest,

R. Deliver us, O Lord.

V. May Thy mercy, O Lord, come upon us.

R. For we have hoped in Thee.

V. O Lord, hear our prayer.

R. And let our cry come unto Thee.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

### LET US PRAY!

Defend, we beseech Thee, O Lord, this house from all evil powers and from every injury of tempests. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Give us, we beseech Thee, O Almighty God, by the intercession of Mary, the Mother of God, the holy angels, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, virgins, widows, and all Thy saints, Thy continual protection; grant us favorable winds, give us from heaven, unworthy though we are, Thy protection against lightning and tempest; protect from henceforth all mankind, and turn aside by the power of Thy might all evil influences of wind and weather.

O God, who controllest all nature for them who serve Thee, and by the force of Thy tempests causest them to do homage to Thy Majesty, remove all storms from us, and by Thy continual grace grant us favorable weather, that we may obtain mercy from Thee whose anger we fear. Through our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

The priest then gives the blessing, saying:

V. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

R. Henceforth world without end.

V. Our help is in the name of the Lord,

R. Who made heaven and earth.

The blessing of Almighty God † the Father, † the Son, and of the † Holy Ghost, be upon you, upon this



place, and upon the fruits of the earth, and remain with you forever. Amen.

## ON THE HOLY CROSS.

*Why is the Cross so highly venerated?*

**B**ECAUSE it is the altar on which Christ offered Himself for us, the instrument with which He accomplished our redemption, the victorious banner sprinkled with the blood of Christ, which conquered the devil and overcomes sin.

*Are we permitted to adore the Cross of Christ?*

By no means, for adoration belongs to God only. When the Church in venerating the Cross uses words which imply adoration, or, as in the preceding prayer, ascribes salvation to it, the words refer to Christ who redeemed us on the Cross, and who therefore deserves the most grateful adoration.

*How do we best venerate the Cross of Christ?*

By signing ourselves openly with the sign of the Cross, and by never being ashamed to show it true veneration; by loving the Cross, that is, by patiently, cheerfully, and with pleasure bearing the afflictions God sends us, and according to the doctrine and example of Christ, by daily taking up our cross and following Him. (*Luke ix. 23.*)

*Why are crosses erected on highways and other places?*

In order to remind us continually of Christ and His sufferings, and to encourage us to grateful love of Him, for St. Paul says: Looking on Jesus the author and finisher of faith, who having joy set before him, endured the Cross, despising the shame, and now sitteth on the right hand of the throne of God. (*Heb. xii. 2.*)

*Why is the cross carried in public processions?*

To show before the whole world that we are not ashamed of the Cross of Christ, but rather, like St. Paul, glory in it. But God forbid, that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. (*Gal. vi. 14.*)



*Are our opponents wrong in being such enemies of the Cross, and on that account condemning us?*

They are very wrong, for they thus condemn Christ Himself who for love of us bore the Cross, and they place themselves among those of whom St. Paul says: For many walk, of whom I have told you often (and now tell you weeping) that they are enemies of the Cross of Christ, whose end is destruction. (*Phil. iii. 18, 19.*)

*Why do we sign ourselves with the sign of the Cross?*

To testify that we are Christians and worshipers of Christ Crucified, and have no fellowship with the enemies of the Cross of Christ; to profess our faith in the Most Holy Trinity; to honor, and prove our grateful remembrance of the sufferings and death of Christ, who redeemed us and obtained all good things for us by His death on the Cross; to overcome the devil and his temptations, for he hates the Cross, and is banished by nothing more quickly than by the sign of the Cross; to perform all our undertakings happily in the name of Jesus, and to be preserved by Christ's merits from all harm of body and soul.

*Is the making of the sign of the Cross an old custom?*

The earliest Fathers of the Church mention this custom, and say it originated with the apostles. St. Nicephorus informs us that St. John the Evangelist signed himself with the sign of the Cross; Tertullian (A. D. 160) urges the Christians to make the sign of the Cross when coming in and going out, when dressing, at table, in their rooms, when sitting down, and before every undertaking. St. Ephrem († A. D. 378) writes: "Arm thyself with the sign of the Cross as with a shield, sign all thy members and thy heart, but sign thyself not only with thy hand, but with thy mind. Thy work, thy coming in and thy going out, thy bed, and the ground over which thou dost pass, sign every thing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; for these are the strongest weapons."

*Why do the priests make the sign of the Cross over the people at divine service?*

That the abundant blessings of grace which Christ has obtained for us, may be imparted to the Christians, as St. Paul says: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with spir-



itual blessings in heavenly places, in Christ. (*Ephes. i. 3.*) A type of this custom was given by the Patriarch Jacob, when with crossed hands he blessed Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasse. This is a very old custom in the Church; the Council of Agade in the year 506 directed, that after prayers the people should be dismissed by the priest with the sign of the Cross.

### PRAYER BEFORE A CRUCIFIX.

(By St. Augustine.)

Behold, O kind and most sweet Jesus, I cast myself on my knees in Thy sight, and with the most fervent desire of my soul I pray and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst impress upon my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope and charity, with true repentance for my sins, and a firm desire of amendment, whilst with deep affection and grief of soul I ponder within myself, and mentally contemplate Thy five precious wounds: having before my eyes that which David spoke in prophecy: "They pierced my hands and my feet; they have numbered all my bones."\*

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### INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. AUGUSTINE, APOSTLE OF ENGLAND.

(May 26.)



IN the year 596 St. Gregory the Great sent Augustine of the Order of St. Benedict, and Prior of St. Gregory's monastery at Rome, with several other monks of the same order to preach the gospel to the English nation. King Ethelbert and his queen kindly received the missionaries and gave them an audience in the open air. The religious men went to them in procession carrying for their banner a silver cross and an image of our Redeemer. Shortly

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\* A plenary indulgence can be gained by any one who after receiving holy Communion, says this prayer penitently before a crucifix.



after the king received baptism publicly, and through the labors of these holy monks no less than ten thousand of his subjects are said to have been baptized in a single day. The saint and his companions went from town to town and at their entering they implored God's mercy on the place. Wherever they visited many of the inhabitants believed and were baptized, for the people of England could not do otherwise than admire the holy simplicity of St. Augustine and his monks, the innocence of their lives, and the sweetness of the heavenly doctrine preached to them. In 597 St. Augustine was consecrated bishop by Virgilius, bishop of Arles, in France. After his consecration the saint returned immediately to Britain. He then sent Laurence and Peter to Rome to solicit a supply of laborers, and they brought over several excellent disciples of Pope Gregory: among whom were Mellitus, the first bishop of London; Justus, the first bishop of Rochester; Paulinus, the first archbishop of York, and Rufinianus, the third abbot of St. Augustine's. With this colony of new missionaries the holy Pope sent all things necessary for the divine worship and the service of the church, such as: sacred vessels, altar-cloths, ornaments for churches, and vestments for priests and clerks, relics of the holy apostles and martyrs, and many books, as venerable Bede writes. St. Augustine wrote frequently to St. Gregory, consulting him in the least difficulties which occurred in his ministry; which shows the tenderness of his conscience. In the year 600 Pope Gregory sent him the archiepiscopal pallium, with authority to consecrate twelve bishops, who should be subject to his metropolitan See. Having wrought many miracles while converting the English nation, and built many churches and monasteries St. Augustine was called to his heavenly reward on the 26th. of May, 604.

The Introit of the Mass: Ps. 131. Let Thy priests, O Lord, be clothed with justice, and let Thy saints rejoice: for Thy servant David's sake, turn not away the face of Thy anointed. O Lord, remember David, and all his meekness. Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Graciously hear our prayers, we beseech Thee, O Lord, which we offer unto Thee in the solemnity of blessed Augustine, Thy confessor and bishop: and as he deserved worthily to serve Thee, so by his merits interceding for us, absolve us from all our sins. Thro'. &c.



EPISTLE. (*Heb.* vii. 23—27.) BRETHREN, there were made many priests, because by reason of death they were not suffered to continue: but Jesus, for that he continueth for ever, hath an everlasting priesthood. Whereby he is able also to save for ever them that come to God by him, always living to make intercession for us. For it was fitting that we should have such a high-priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens: who needeth not daily (as the other priests) to offer sacrifice first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this Jesus Christ our Lord did once, in offering himself.

EXPLANATION. The Apostle notes this difference between the high-priests of the law and our high-priest Jesus Christ: that they, being removed by death, made way for their successors, whereas our Lord Jesus is a priest forever and has no successor, but lives and concurs forever with his ministers, the priests of the New Testament, in all their functions. Secondly, that no one priest of the law, nor all of them together, could offer that absolute sacrifice of everlasting redemption which our one high-priest Jesus Christ, hath offered once and forever.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxiv. 42—47.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: Watch ye, because ye know not at what hour your Lord will come. But this know ye, that if the good man of the house knew at what hour the thief would come, he would certainly watch, and would not suffer his house to be broken open. Wherefore be you also ready, because at what hour you know not, the Son of man will come. Who, thinkest thou, is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath appointed over his family, to give them meat in season? Blessed is that servant, whom, when his lord shall come, he shall find so doing. Amen I say to you, he shall place him over all his goods.



*Why should we always be prepared to die?*

Because of death we are sure, yet we know not the day nor the hour.

*How should we prepare for death?*

We should faithfully fulfil our duties towards God, ourselves and our fellow-men. As the man is called a faithful and prudent servant who, having fulfilled his duties, receives at the hour of his death the reward of the faithful and prudent servant: "Well done, good and faithful servant, because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF VENERABLE BEDE.

(May 27.)



VENERABLE Bede, of the order of St. Benedict, was born in England in the year 673. In his seventh year he came to the Benedictine monastery of St. Peter at Wermouth, and afterwards to that of St. Paul at Jarrow, where he finished his studies under the Abbot Ceolfrid. He also received instruction from the celebrated Primate Theodore, and the Abbot Adrian of Canterbury. He became so thorough in the Greek language as to speak it as fluently as his mother tongue. Having been ordained deacon by John, the bishop of Beverley, he continued his studies, especially that of the holy Bible until the year 702, when he was ordained priest. Although Bede, in all obedience and humility, took part in the most common manual labor he nevertheless devoted, according to his abbot's will, the most of his time to his studies, and instructed at the same time some six hundred monks; besides he wrote many learned treatises, mostly explanations of the holy Bible. He wrote on all branches of science, on philosophy, astronomy, arithmetic, grammar, history of the Church; made poems even in the Greek language. Pitt says that Europe has not produced a learned man who could be compared with Venerable Bede. Through humility he refused to be-



come abbot. The spirit of humility and piety pervades all his writings. When sixty-two years of age, he became sick two weeks before Easter, but he nevertheless continued to teach, and translated the gospel of St. John into English. On Tuesday before the Ascension of our Lord he dictated with great zeal to his disciples, for he felt that his end was approaching. On the following day he received the sacraments of the dying, after which he called all the priests to his death-bed. These he begged to remember him at the holy sacrifice of the Mass. All wept bitterly whilst he spoke with enthusiasm of his departure. Having dictated in the evening at the request of his disciple Wilbert the last sentence of that masterly treatise on St. John's Gospel, he sat on the floor of his cell, turned his head towards the oratory and said the words: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the holy Ghost" — and slept in the Lord on the Vigil of the Ascension of our Lord, 735. — A voice from heaven proclaimed his sanctity, as Alcuin informs us, and a sick person was immediately cured by touching his corpse. The second council of Aachen, 836, calls Bede "The venerable and admirable doctor of modern times."

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who dost glorify the Church through the erudition of Venerable Bede, thy confessor and doctor: graciously grant thy servants that they may always be illumined by his wisdom, and supported by his merits. Thro'. &c.

*Epistle, see Feast of St. Augustine, August 28th; Gospel, see Feast of St. Bernard, August 20th.*

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. BONIFACE, APOSTLE OF THE GERMANS.

[June 5.]

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GERMANY owes much to this great and holy man who brought to it the doctrine of Jesus Christ, who led the Germans out of the darkness of paganism into the light of divine truth, who won them for heaven, and saved thousands of immortal souls. It is indeed well that the glorious labors of this blessed benefactor of the Germans, should be everywhere known, and honor given to God because of him.

St. Boniface was born at Kirtor, England, about 680, of noble and Christian parents. He received in baptism the name Winifred which he retained, until Pope Gregory II. bestowed upon him that of Boniface, which means one who does good, a benefactor. His pious parents were devoted to the priests who were at that time preaching the gospel to the heathens, and most hospitably received them at their house, where the little Boniface heard much about Jesus and His holy Church, and of the missionaries who go into all countries in order to convert the heathens, how they preached, and suffered for Christ, of the peaceful monastic life wherein God is so faithfully served. All these things rejoiced the heart of the boy, and aroused in him the desire to enter a monastery, to become a pious, learned preacher of the faith to the heathens; and thus as a boy, Boniface came to the monastery for which he was designed by God. Under the care of the pious and learned Benedictine Abbot Winbert of the Nutcell Monastery, Boniface soon acquired much knowledge and, what is worth much more in the sight of God, reached a high degree of piety. He received ordination when thirty years of age, and prayed the abbot to permit him to go to Friesland as a preacher of the faith to the heathens, and to win them for Christ. Accompanied by two monks and with the abbot's blessing, he went to Friesland in the year 716; but it happened just at the time of his arrival that Radbod, the rude king of the barbarians, was at war with his neighbors, so that Boniface could effect nothing and was obliged to return to England. In the mean time the abbot died, and the monks now sought to make Boniface abbot; but he refused the position and went to Rome to see Pope Gregory II.,





at whose feet he threw himself, begging for an apostolic mission. The Pope received him with cordiality, admired his zeal, and made him his legate or messenger to Germany, that he might gain that country for God. Boniface, with the Pope's blessing, then went to Thuringia, where some time previously Christianity had been planted, but had not taken root; the people had returned to their idols and no longer knew anything of the true God. Boniface went to



work to weed up the tares and to plant the seed of God's word once more in their hearts; and God blessed his labors. While here he heard of the death of Radbod, the king of the heathens in Friesland, whither he now hastened, meeting there his countryman, St. Willebrord, Archbishop of Utrecht, in union with whom he preached the gospel for three years in this neighborhood, and had the joy of seeing the temples of the idols brought to the ground and the cross everywhere triumphant. But when the aged St. Willebrord sought to make Boniface his successor, the saint escaped and went once more to Thuringia, where his word penetrated the hearts of the people, and thousands received baptism. To complete and secure the work of the country's conversion, Boniface founded the monastery of Amœneberg, settled some pious monks in it, and then journeyed to Hessa, where he preached with the same zeal, baptized thousands of idolaters, and built a monastery and hermitage at Wanfried; after which he went to Rome to give an account of his labors. The Pope heard with joy the report of the conversion of so many idolaters, and in St. Peter's Church, on November 30st., 723, consecrated the saintly man bishop, and gave him the beautiful name of Boniface, after which the saint joyfully returned to Germany. He continued his labors in Hessa, and worked ceaselessly to exterminate the last traces of paganism. He came once to Geismar in Hessa, a place which still contained some pagans and superstitious Christians, who especially venerated an immense oak-tree which was called the **thunder-oak**, after the old German god Donar, thunder. Startled at this, the saint made up his mind to cut down the tree; the heathens all assembled there, but the Christians also came. Surrounded by his priests, Boniface commenced to cut the oak, while the idolaters raged, and cursed him. Hardly had the saint struck it than the tree, splitting into four parts, fell to the ground. The idolaters believed that the gods would punish the saint; but when they saw the tree lying on the ground, their hearts were moved and they praised the true God. Then Boniface raising his voice preached to them that their gods were false, and he won the whole multitude for Christ. Of the wood of the oak he built a chapel which he dedicated to the Apostle St. Peter, and the place became one of the most flourishing Christian settlements in Hessa. Boniface everywhere found open hearts, built churches all over the country, and founded in Thuringia the monastery of Ohrdruf. He remained in this monastery until the arrival of priests from England, for whom he had written to assist



him; the work was great and the laborers few. Pious and able men soon came from England, men who for the love of Christ and the salvation of souls, left their beloved country and all and everything. Among these were especially prominent Saints Willibald and Wunibald, who were brothers, Witta and Wigbert, and St. Lullus. There also came a great number of maidens: St. Walburga, Lioba, Thecla, Chunechild, Contruda, and others. St. Boniface founded everywhere monasteries and convents for the new arrivals, around which the converted natives of the country settled themselves. The light of faith, science, refinement and culture, spread rapidly; the noblest of the young men hastened to dedicate themselves to the service of the Lord, and to attend the monastery schools, and great men came forth from them. Thus the work of Germany's conversion advanced prosperously, gloriously, to the great joy of St. Boniface, whom Pope Gregory III. elevated to the dignity of Archbishop of all Germany.

The saint now went through Saxony and Bavaria, everywhere sowing the seed of the word of God, administering the Sacraments, and organizing new congregations. Then he went once more to Rome to make his report, and to procure authority and advice. Returning from Rome, he went by invitation of the Duke of Bavaria, Odilo, into his dominions and divided the country into four dioceses: Salzburg, Freising, Ratisbon and Passau.

He also sought to exterminate heathen customs and to plant living Christianity in the hearts of the people. He did not, however, remain long in Bavaria, but journeyed back to Hessa, Franconia and Thuringia, untiringly propagating the religion of Christ. Still further to promote and to preserve the good, which he with his zealous assistants had sowed and fostered, St. Boniface resolved to found an extensive institution which should become a nursery of Christian life, art and science for all Germany. For the execution of his plan he called upon the priest Sturm, whom he had educated in the monastery of Fritzlar, to assist him, gave him his blessing and sent him with two attendants into the depths of the Hessian forests, saying: "Go now into the wilderness of Buchonia, and look for a place suitable for the servants of the Lord; for well able is the Lord to find a place for His own, even in the desert." After a long search, Sturm found a suitable spot near the river Fulda, which place was procured as a gift from the major-domo, Carlmann. Sturm with seven brothers settled upon it. In a short time arose the celebrated Benedictine abbey of Fulda, which in a few years contained four



hundred monks, and from which went forth in time saintly archbishops, bishops, priests and ministers of the faith. Young men, desirous of learning, here found instruction in all departments of science and art, and here were found architects, sculptors, painters, mechanics and farmers, who carried true culture to the remotest districts. But the greatest blessing springing from this famous abbey was the increasing and the establishing of living Christianity in Middle Germany, the object which St. Boniface always had in view.

In 744, St. Boniface went to France to promote order and unity in the faith, and to suppress the heresies which had arisen there. Now wherever the saint had founded dioceses in Germany, Christianity had taken deep root and bore glorious fruit; but to make complete this splendid work, there was needed a centre of union and support among the newly-erected dioceses. Pope Zachary, therefore, raised the city of Mentz to an archdiocese with Boniface in its chair, to whom all the converted nations in the whole Franconian country were now subject.

When Boniface had humbly subjected himself to the Pope's orders, had established a great number of parish and convent churches, and well organized religious life, he resigned his episcopal seat at Mentz to his assistant Lullus, and with several companions went into Friesland to complete the conversion of the people to Christ. With all the enthusiastic zeal of youth he, now a man of seventy-three years, passed through the country, teaching and administering the Sacraments. He had advanced to the shore of the German Ocean, when his glorious life was closed by a glorious death. In the year 755 he stopped under a pitched tent, in a place called Dorkum, to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to the lately baptized; but the heathens who saw their idolatrous images falling and the cross everywhere rising, had long been filled with hatred for the saint, and threatened to put him to death. Early on the morning of Pentecost, June 5th, while Boniface was waiting for the neophytes that were to be confirmed, instead of them, there appeared a number of armed idolaters of Friesland, who rushed upon him and his companions. Holding the gospel above his head, Boniface received his death blow, and with him fifty-two persons died the death of martyrs. His body found its last resting-place in the monastery at Fulda, and his memory will last and be held in benediction as long as a Catholic church remains in Germany.



The Introit of the Mass reads: O ye priests of the Lord, bless the Lord! O ye holy and humble of heart, praise God. All ye works of the Lord, bless the Lord: praise and exalt Him above all forever. (*Dan. iii.*) Glory &c.

*Prayer of the Church. (See feast of St. Blase, February 3rd.)*

EPISTLE. (ii *Cor.* i. 3—7.) BRETHREN, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation: that we also may be able to comfort them who are in all distress, by the exhortation wherewith we also are exhorted by God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so also by Christ doth our comfort abound. Now whether we be in tribulation, it is for your exhortation and salvation, or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation, or whether we be exhorted, it is for your exhortation and salvation, which worketh the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer. That our hope for you may be steadfast: knowing that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so shall you be also of the consolation, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

EXPLANATION. At Ephesus, where St. Paul had preached, a sedition arose among the people, in which the apostle nearly lost his life, but his confidence in God, and the prayers of the people saved him. In his afflictions God gave him wonderful consolations which he received as admonitions to console all who, like himself, were in affliction, or, as he beautifully expresses it, partakers of the sufferings of Christ, who drink from the chalice of Christ's sufferings: but especially those who, like himself, partake of Christ's sufferings in announcing the gospel. St. Boniface was also a partaker of these sufferings, and, like the holy Apostle, found great consolation in Christ, who took away from him every bitterness, by giving him the hope of an eternal life, and a blissful reward in His heavenly kingdom. The inheritance of the servants and friends of God in this world is affliction and sufferings, but these redound to their salvation.



Endure all your sufferings patiently, my dear Christian, as coming from the hand of God; bear them for the love of Jesus; consolation and reward will not fail.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xvi. 24—27.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For he that will save his life, shall lose it. And he that shall lose his life for my sake, shall find it. For what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what exchange shall a man give for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with his angels: and then will he render to every man according to his works.

*What is meant by denying ourselves?*

It means to resist our own improper inclinations, desires and covetousness, to mortify and repress them, and make our own will conformable to the divine.

Man's life is a warfare with implacable enemies: the world, the flesh and the devil. The most dangerous enemies whom we carry always with us, are: the flesh, evil desires, covetousness, immoderate self-love, which always draw us away from God and from heavenly things, and urge us to sin. Against these enemies we must fight continually and until death, mortifying our flesh, subduing our senses, and never yielding to improper desires.

*What is meant by carrying our cross?*

To endure patiently according to the example of Christ the daily inward and outward temptations, sufferings and afflictions, which God either sends or permits.

*What is meant by, he that will save his life, shall lose it, and he that shall lose his life for my sake, shall find it?*

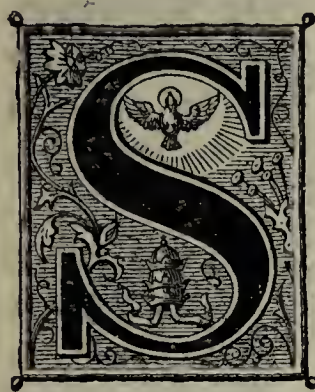
By this is meant that he who struggles with and overcomes his soul's evil desires and evil inclinations, so that at last they are conquered and made to vanish, shall preserve his soul for eternal life, because he keeps his soul free from sin, which kills the higher, spiritual life. But he who makes no struggle for his soul, that is, does not mortify its improper inclinations, desires and passions, will fall



into sin and lose eternal salvation. But if the mortification, the self-renunciation, should bring true fruit, it must be undertaken for Christ's sake, for the honor of God, and for our soul's salvation.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. COLUMBKILL OR COLUMBA.

[June 9.]



**S**T. COLUMBKILL or Columba, of most noble extraction, was born at Garten, in the present county of Donegal, on the 7th of December, 521. From his childhood he devoted himself to the love of God with an entire disengagement of his heart from the world, and in perfect purity of mind and body. In the great school of the holy Bishop Aidan he learned the holy Scriptures and the lessons of ascetic life. Being ordained priest in 546, he began to give instruction in piety and sacred science, and soon formed many disciples. In 550 he founded the great monastery of Durrough, and afterwards many others, so that at the time of his death he had founded no less than one hundred monasteries in Ireland and Scotland. To these monasteries he has given a rule composed by himself.

King Dermot being offended at the great zeal of St. Columbkil in reproofing public vices, the holy abbot left his native country, and came into Scotland. This happened in 565. There he preached and performed many miracles. The result of his labor was that he converted from idolatry to the faith of Christ the whole northern nation of the Picts. The southern Picts had received the light of faith long before by the preaching of St. Ninyas.

St. Columbkil's manner of living was always most austere. He lay on the bare floor with a stone for his pillow, and never interrupted his fast. His biographers say that despite his austerity his countenance always appeared wonderfully cheerful, showing the constant interior serenity of his holy soul, and the unspeakable joy with which it overflowed from the presence of the Holy Ghost. Every moment of his precious time he employed for the honor of God, either in praying, reading, writing, or preaching. His incomparable mildness and charity towards all men,



on all occasions, won the hearts of all who conversed with him, and his virtues, miracles and extraordinary gift of prophecy, commanded the veneration of all ranks of men. He was of such authority that neither king nor people did anything without his consent. Four years before he died, St. Columbkill had a vision of angels which caused him many tears, because these angels told him that on account of the prayers of the British and Scottish churches his exile on earth would be prolonged yet four years. Having labored in Scotland thirty-four years, he clearly and openly foretold the time of his death, and on Saturday, the ninth of June, kneeling before the altar he received the Viaticum, gave his blessing once more to his disciples, and sweetly slept in the Lord, 597, in his 77th year. He was one of the greatest patriarchs of the monastic order in Ireland, and is justly called "the Apostle of the Picts."

Introit of the Mass: The mouth of the just man shall meditate wisdom, and his tongue shall speak judgment: the law of his God is in his heart. (*Ps. xxxvi. 30—31.*) Be not emulous of evil doers, nor envy them that work iniquity. (*Ps. xxxvi. 1.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Let the intercession of the blessed abbot Columba, we beseech Thee, O Lord, commend us unto Thee: that what by our own merits we are unworthy to receive, we may obtain by his patronage. Thro. &c.

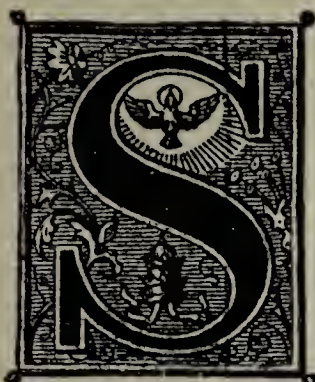
*Lesson and Explanation, see Feast of St. Anthony, Jan. 17th. Gospel, see Feast of St. Benedict, March 21st.*





## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. ALOYSIUS.

[June 21.]



T. ALOYSIUS was born on the 9th of March, 1568, at Castiglione, a castle of his parents, Ferdinand, Marquis of Gonzaga, and Martha Tana Santena. The pious mother early laid in the heart of her little child the foundation of that holy fear of God which is the beginning of all wisdom, of all true virtue. Would that all parents might follow this mother, and often admonish their children in these words: "Children, fear God, His eye follows you everywhere, day and night; never venture to do evil in His sight." St. Aloysius' father, a brave hero, intended to educate his son to be a warrior, and for this end gave him various kinds of weapons for playthings, even took him, when only seven years of age, into camp. Here the little boy often heard the soldiers use improper words, and not knowing what he was doing, repeated them; but as soon as his tutor reproved him for this, another syllable of a bad word was never heard from his lips. Yet he was all his life grieved for this childish thoughtlessness, and wept over it as over the greatest sin. Having returned to his parents' castle, he made his mother and his tutor most happy by his ready obedience. He always felt the greatest repugnance to the life of a soldier, and the more anxiously desired to devote himself to the service of God. His father perceiving this change, was very much annoyed, but consoled himself by thinking that if his son would not be a hero, he would at all events become an excellent ruler over his subjects, and, therefore, sent him with his brother Rudolph to study in Florence. There Aloysius with many tears made a general confession, and as he had the most childlike veneration for the Queen of Heaven, he made a vow of perpetual chastity in honor of the most pure and immaculate Virgin; this vow he never violated. In the year 1581 he received from the Archbishop of Milan, Charles Borromeo, his first Communion, for which he had prepared with the greatest care, and from this time there was plainly seen in him a most ardent devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, before which he would remain for hours, lost in meditation. From day to day he advanced in the way of perfection, although in compliance with his father's will he first spent some time at the court of the



Duke of Mantua, and afterwards at the court of Philip II., King of Spain, where he led, in faithful accordance with his vow, an angelic life. His fear of God, his love of purity, his distrust of himself, his humility, his great confidence in Jesus and Mary, the frequent reception of the Sacraments, and persevering prayer, preserved him from every failing, though surrounded by courtiers excessively fond of amusements. The desire to devote himself wholly to God became always greater, and he believed he could best accomplish his wish by entering a religious order. On the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, he asked that Mary, his mother, would enlighten him. He distinctly heard a voice telling him to join the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) and to make this command known to his father confessor, who examined the matter and encouraged Aloysius in his resolution. His mother wished him God-speed, but his father would not hear a word about his son's vocation. For three years he refused his consent, which he gave, however, at the end of that time, overcome by his son's perseverance. The youth hastened on the wings of holy eagerness to the house of the Jesuits at Rome, having first joyfully transferred all the power and wealth which he was to inherit, to his brother Rudolph. He began his novitiate when in his eighteenth year, and soon excelled, in punctual obedience and the practice of all virtues, all his brother novices. He took the vows of the order and received minor orders in the year 1587, the graces of which urged him unto perfection. When in 1591 a pestilence broke out in Rome it was Aloysius who took the most care of the poor stricken ones, until he was himself infected, and on the 21st of June, in the twenty-third year of his age, died the death of the just. The evening before his death, he was visited by the provincial, who came to inquire about his health; with a joyous voice the dying youth said to him: "Father, we go, we go!" "Whither?" asked the other. "To heaven, as I hope through the mercy of God," replied the saint, and there now, in heaven, St. Aloysius shines an angel of innocence. — Happy will it be for you, if you follow him, you will then receive an unfading crown, like that which adorns the brow of this sainted youth.

#### ON THE DEVOTION TO ST. ALOYSIUS.

**F**OR three hundred years St. Aloysius has received in the holy Catholic Church the greatest veneration as a model of innocence and purity, and innumerable graces have been received by those who have perseveringly sought



to imitate him. The Church desires that the young especially should make this saint their model. Experience proves that many who have done this, have been preserved from the snares of the world, and have carried the crown of virginal purity unstained to God. For this end young men and young women should every day recommend themselves to the protection of this holy youth; should cherish with him a filial veneration for the most blessed, most pure Virgin Mary; should impress upon their heart, as he did upon his, the holy fear of God, and distrust of themselves; should shun every occasion of sin, control their senses, especially their eyes, often receive the holy Sacraments, and persevere in prayer; and should, besides, every year perform the Six Sundays' devotion to St. Aloysius, a devotion which in 1739 and 1740 was approved by Pope Clement XII., granting a plenary indulgence for each one of the six Sundays to those who perform the devotion. The devotion can be performed by married, as well as by single persons; it consists in receiving on six successive Sundays the Sacraments of Penance and holy Communion. St. Aloysius should be selected for meditation and imitation, and each time after Communion the prayers for obtaining indulgences, and six "Our Fathers" and "Hail Marys" be said, with the "Glory be to the Father, &c." in commemoration of the six years St. Aloysius spent in religion. This indulgence of the Six Sundays can be gained only once in the year.

### PRAYER OF THE CHURCH IN HONOR OF ST. ALOYSIUS.

O God, Thou Dispenser of heavenly gifts, who didst unite in the angelic youth Aloysius a wonderful innocence of life, with an equally wonderful penance, grant through his merits and prayers, that we, who have not followed him in innocence, may imitate him in penance. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.





## INSTRUCTION ON THE NATIVITY OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST.

[June 24.]

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*Why is St. John's birthday celebrated instead of the day of his death, as of other saints?*



BECAUSE St. John was sanctified in the womb of his mother and was, so to speak, born a great saint, while others only by a life-long contest and toil attained to the sanctity secured to them by their death.

The Introit of the Mass reads: The Lord hath called me by my name from my mother's womb, and He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword: in the shadow of His hand He hath protected me, and hath made me as a chosen arrow. (*Isai. xlix.*) It is good to give praise to the Lord, and to sing to Thy name, O Most High. (*Ps. xci.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who hast made this present day full of honor to us in the birth of blessed John: give unto Thy people the grace of spiritual joys, and direct the souls of all the faithful into the way of everlasting salvation. Thro'. &c.

LESSON. (*Isai. xlix. 1—3, 5—7.*) Give ear, ye islands, and hearken, ye people from afar: the Lord hath called me from the womb, from the bowels of my mother he hath been mindful of my name. And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword: in the shadow of his hand he hath protected me, and hath made me as a chosen arrow: in his quiver he hath hidden me. And he said to me: Thou art my servant, Israel, for in thee will I glory. And now saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant: Behold, I have given thee to be the light of the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation even to the farthest part of the earth. Kings shall see,



and princes shall rise up, and adore for the Lord's sake, and for the Holy One of Israel, who hath chosen thee.

EXPLANATION. In his usual, sublime language the prophet here foretells Christ, whom God has made the head and ruler, for the light and salvation of all nations; but the greater part of these words apply also to St. John, as will be seen from his life.

GOSPEL. (*Luke i. 57—68.*) ELIZABETH'S full time of being delivered was come, and she brought forth a son. And her neighbors and kinsfolk heard that the Lord had showed his great mercy towards her, and they congratulated with her. And it came to pass that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they called him by his father's name, Zachary. And his mother answering, said: Not so, but he shall be called John. And they said to her: There is none of thy kindred that is called by that name. And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. And demanding a writing-table, he wrote, saying: John is his name. And they all wondered. And immediately his mouth was opened, and his tongue loosed; and he spoke, blessing God. And fear came upon all their neighbors: and all these things were noised abroad over all the hill-country of Judea: and all they that had heard them, laid them up in their heart, saying: What a one, think ye, shall this child be? For the hand of the Lord was with him. And Zachary his father was filled with the Holy Ghost, and he prophesied, saying: Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, because he hath visited and wrought the redemption of his people.

INSTRUCTION. I. It was for Zachary and Elizabeth, who to their greatest sorrow lived childless to old age, an assurance of God's mercy that He should then present them with a child, and such a holy child. But they had sought to make themselves worthy of this grace by continual prayer, by submission to God's will, by the patient



endurance of that which was, at that time, a disgrace, their unfruitfulness, while in the bringing up of this child they manifested their gratitude for his coming. — Childless, married people ought to learn from this, that they may pray to God for children, but they should at the same time be resigned to the will of God. It is a favor to many that God gives them no children; for if they received the grace to have them, they would bring them up in an unchristian manner, and thereby risk their own salvation. II. If God should hear the prayers of such, as He heard the prayers of Zachary and Elizabeth, they should not fail to thank God and to offer Him the child, promising to bring it up in the fear of the Lord. III. Elizabeth's relations and friends rejoiced with her in her happiness, congratulating her upon it. — If good is given to our fellow-men, we also should rejoice, praise and thank God for it. Thus we participate in their happiness. IV. The name John, which means Blessed of God, was given to the child by God Himself, and John strove to live always in accordance with his name. — We receive from the Church in baptism some saint's name, in order to incite us to imitate our patron in virtue. Let us see that we do not bear the name without advantage from it. V. When Zachary would not believe the angel's announcement he became dumb, now that he believes his tongue is loosened. (*Luke* i. 18—20.) — When the sinner punished by God, returns and repents, God will either take the punishment from him, or will give him grace to bear it longer for the sake of making greater satisfaction. VI. Zacharias praised God loudly and publicly for the grace He had given him. — Woe to those who bury the graces they have received, in forgetfulness, and do not thank God for them. They will receive no more graces, for the hope of the unthankful shall melt away as the winter's ice. (*Wisd.* xvi. 29.)

### LIFE OF ST. JOHN.

**S**T. John could not have any greater panegyrist than Christ himself who at one time calls him an angel, (*Matt.* xi. 10.) at another, one more than a prophet, (*Luke* vii. 28.) again, a burning and shining light, (*John* v. 35.) by which He sufficiently manifested the greatness of the saint. Indeed, John was one of the greatest saints, endowed with the most extraordinary gifts. An angel foretold his birth; God Himself named him, and sanctified him in the womb of his mother by Christ's presence at the visitation



of the Blessed Virgin Mary, so that he was secure from the world's corruption. God drew him in early youth to the desert, where he lived like an angel under His protection, preparing himself for his future ministry. He led there the most rigorous, penitential life; locusts and wild honey were his only food, a coarse camel's hair garment and a leathern belt around his waist his only covering, wild animals his companions, communion with God by prayer and meditation his entertainment. When he was thirty years of age, God commanded that like the voice of one crying in the wilderness, he should announce the Messiah whom he had baptized in the Jordan, and show to the world the Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world. Then, with his exhortations to repentance, St. John as with a sharp sword penetrated men's hearts, seeking to prepare them to receive the Saviour. His exhortations to penance did not consist in mere words, but in an example of the most rigorous mortification, in which he is a light guiding men to salvation.

Finally, when his zeal for the salvation of souls impelled him to tell King Herod to his face that it is not lawful to take one's brother's wife and live with her, he was cast into prison. When the daughter of this adulterous woman, Herodias, was once dancing before Herod, he was so well pleased with her that he promised to give her whatever she should ask. Instigated by her impious mother, she demanded the head of John the Baptist. John was beheaded and rewarded with a martyr's crown for all the victories with which he, in whom God had so gloriously manifested Himself, had adorned his career; leaving to all the most beautiful example of innocence, penance, and a heroic zeal for the salvation of souls. And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away, says Christ. (*Matt. xi. 12.*)

We may be sinners or we may be innocent, and yet, like St. John if we would bring forth worthy fruits of penance and be not excluded from heaven, we must use violence.

## ON THE NECESSITY OF EDUCATING CHILDREN.

*What a one shall this child be? (Luke i. 66.)*

**T**HUS said the friends, neighbors and relations of the pious couple Zachary and Elizabeth, when they saw and heard the wonderful incidents which accompanied the



birth of their son John. What a one shall this child be? so parents often say to each other, when they look upon their own little children, and see how even in early days certain propensities appear in them, causing great wonder. How often would parents be overwhelmed with pain and grief, if they could know in advance how these tender little ones whose good and remarkable qualities and whose extraordinary talents they admire, on whom their eyes rest with pleasure, whom every one praises, — how these children would one day hasten to temporal and eternal ruin, preparing for their parents no joy, but many afflictions and much misery! Whence does it come that so many parents are deceived in the expectations they entertained in regard to their children, that their advancing youth, notwithstanding all the education bestowed upon it, becomes more and more disorderly and impious? It is because parents so seldom observe that which is written of the young Tobias: From his infancy he (his father) taught him to fear God, and to abstain from all sin; (*Tob. i. 10.*) because they regard not the apostle's admonition: And you fathers, bring up your children in the discipline and correction of the Lord; (*Eph. vi. 4.*) because they forget that every child is like a young tree that must be carefully guarded, straightened, bound to a post, trimmed and protected against insects, wind and frost; because they remember no longer the wise man's counsel: Instruct thy children, and bow down their necks from their childhood, (*Ecclus. vii. 25.*) and, thou shalt beat thy child with a rod, and deliver his soul from hell; (*Prov. xxiii. 14.*) because they pay no attention to the words: The child that is left to his own will, bringeth his mother to shame, (*Prov. xxix. 15.*) and, he that loveth his son, frequently chastiseth him, that he may rejoice in his latter end, and not grope after the doors of his neighbors, (*Ecclus. xxx. 1.*) that is, for protection, consolation and help against the rebellious child. They do not bring the child early to Jesus, the divine Friend of children; they do not teach it to fear God and abhor sin above all things; they rejoice in the many talents of the child, but do not seek to direct them to God, their only end; they do not remove from the child all that which poisons and corrupts the innocent heart open to every impression; they neglect to make it pray in early childhood, to make it exercise the necessary Christian virtues, the love of God and their neighbor, humility, obedience, meekness, peacefulness and modesty; in a word, they educate their children for anything rather than for



God, the Church and their country. God, the Church, and the country are not satisfied with an education in which attention is paid only to those things which will enable the child to do well in this world, or that will make a great show, and receive power, honor and praise. This false and pernicious education causes so many parents to complain of their grown children; causes God to punish them severely even here on earth, more terribly in the other world; causes the Church to lament, and good men to be filled with fear.

If education is to be a truly Christian one, so that parents may rejoice in their children here and in the next world, and a better generation grow up, education must be founded on religion, must commence and end with God. Parents should consider that their children are a precious trust, which God has confided to them, and of which He will demand a strict account on the Day of Judgment; they should remember that their children are created for heaven, are redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus, and sanctified by the Holy Ghost in baptism. In their earliest childhood, Christian parents should make their children acquainted with God, the Highest Good, keep them attentive to devout prayer, especially imprint upon their hearts the holy fear of God, lead them early to Jesus, often place His beautiful example before them, infuse His holy teachings into their hearts, instruct them in sincere veneration for the blessed Virgin Mary, daily recommending them to this beloved Mother. Being, as it were, the guardian angels of their children, parents should watch day and night over the innocence and purity of their hearts, remove them from association with bad children and degenerate grown persons, be attentive to watch all their steps, be vigilant concerning all their omissions and commissions, banish from their knowledge all bad example, improper words and songs, and bad books. If they truly love their children, they will not permit obstinacy, stubbornness, or disobedience in them, and should: withhold not correction from a child, (*Prov.* xxiii. 13.) make use of strict discipline united with affection, and suffer no ill manners to grow with them. They should bring their children early to the practice of Christian virtues, and teach them to mortify their evil inclinations; often exhort them, when they have arrived at the proper age, to receive the holy Sacraments; see that their children do not spend their youth in idleness, but thoroughly learn all that which is necessary for them to know, not superficially as half educated, half instructed persons, who can gossip about everything, but are at the same time



shallow-minded; they should above all give their children a good example, coöperate with the priests and teachers, and thus strive to bring up good, pious, religious, virtuous children of God, members for the Church and citizens for the country.

Woe to the parents who do not educate their children for God and heaven! What fear and terror will come upon them on the Judgment Day, when God will demand pure and unharmed, the children He confided to them, when parents must acknowledge that through their fault their children have been excluded from heaven and are lost forever!

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF SS. PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES.

[June 29.]



PETER, formerly called Simon, from Bethsaida in Galilee, was a son of Jonas and a brother of Andrew, by whom he was brought to Christ. After the great draught of fishes, when our Lord said to him and Andrew: Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men, Peter followed the Saviour constantly, from whom he received the most tender proofs of love. Peter was present when Christ appeared in His glory on Mount Thabor, when He raised the daughter of Jairus to life, and when He sweat blood in the agony on Mount Olivet. Peter was also present at the miraculous draught of fishes, which was a figure of the multitudes which he was to bring, by means of the holy Gospel, to the kingdom of God, for Christ called him a fisher of men, and afterwards, because Peter recognized and professed Him to be the Son of the living God, Christ named him Peter, made him the head of the apostles and of the entire Church, made him His vicar and visible representative upon earth, promising to build His Church upon him as upon a rock, gave him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and commanded him to feed His lambs and His sheep. Peter loved our Lord above all things; because of his love he wished to remain with Christ upon Mount Thabor to prevent Him from suffering, and in his love desired to die with Christ. He certainly showed the





greatest courage when Christ was taken, following Him even into the house of Caiphas. But alas, the instability of man! There Peter three times denied the Lord. But the look of forgiving love which Jesus cast upon him, forced from him tears of the deepest contrition. He atoned for his denial by suffering much for Christ. Under the Emperor Nero he was crucified for his faith at Rome, and by his own request with his head downwards, because he did not consider himself worthy to die like Christ.

Oh! that all sinners would seek by such penance to turn their evil into good!

PRAYER TO ST. PETER. O God, who from a poor fisherman hast made St. Peter prince of the



apostles and head of Thy Church, we beseech Thee through his intercession to make us true lambs of Thy flock. Grant, that we may hear his voice, follow his doctrine, and walk in his steps, until we reach that happy pasture where the Good Shepherd, Thine only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, whom St. Peter represented on earth, reigns with Thee and the Holy Ghost forever. Amen.

### SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF ST. PAUL.

**P**AUL, before his conversion called Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin, was born at Tarsus in Cilicia, and was a pupil of Gamaliel. As he had the most zealous attachment for the Jewish law, he was exasperated against the Christians. However, when hastening to Damascus to persecute them, he was converted by the Lord on the way and called to be an apostle. [*See the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul.*] His unwearied labors in the vineyard of the Lord after his conversion, the sufferings which he endured upon his apostolic journeys, and the dangers and persecutions through which he passed in different countries, cannot be described. The zeal and constancy with which he confessed and preached the faith, though in chains and fetters, though scourged and beaten, in hunger and thirst, and through innumerable dangers, are almost incredible. He was so humble that he regarded himself as the least of the apostles, and thanked God fervently that He considered him worthy to suffer for His sake. After he had fought a good fight and finished his course, having everywhere zealously preached the faith, and still more zealously practiced it, he won the crown of justice. On the same day and at the same place in Rome, in which Peter was crucified, he was beheaded, by command of the Emperor Nero. Thus God tries and rewards true virtue. Paul in his life, as after death, worked numberless miracles; even his handkerchief, like St. Peter's shadow, healed sickness and expelled devils. He had so deeply impressed the name of Jesus in his heart, that it was almost continually on his lips, for "out of the fulness of the heart, the mouth speaketh."

Would that we loved Jesus as St. Paul loved Him, then we would, like St. Paul, be ready to do and suffer much for Him.



PRAYER TO ST. PAUL. O St. Paul, chosen vessel of the Lord, who didst carry the name of Jesus to kings and heathens, who didst suffer so much for Christ, and wast never allured from the love of Him: like a brave soldier of Christ, thou hast fought a good battle, a zealous teacher, thou hast preached far and wide the true faith, and the just and merciful God has, therefore, rewarded thee with the crown of justice: pray to God for me, that I who because of my sins am an instrument of wrath, may become an instrument of honor, adorned with the Christian virtues, with which thou art already decorated. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Introit of the Mass consists of Peter's words, spoken after his deliverance from the prison at Jerusalem: Now I know in very deed that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews. (*Acts* xii. 11.) Lord, Thou hast proved me, and known me: Thou hast known my sitting down and my rising up. (*Ps.* cxxxviii.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who hast sanctified this day by the martyrdom of Thy blessed Apostles Peter and Paul: grant unto Thy Church, that as from them it received the first teachings of religion, so it may in all things follow their holy precepts. Thro'. &c.

LESSON. (*Acts* xii. 1—11.) IN THOSE DAYS, Herod the king stretched forth his hands to afflict some of the Church: and he killed James the brother of John with the sword. And seeing that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to take up Peter also. Now it was in the days of the azymes. And when he had apprehended him, he cast him into prison, delivering him to four files of soldiers to be kept, intending after the pasch to bring him forth to the people. Peter therefore was



kept in prison. But prayer was made without ceasing by the Church unto God for him. And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shined in the room: and he striking Peter on the side, raised him up, saying: Arise quickly. And the chains fell off from his hands. And the angel said to him: Gird thyself, and put on thy sandals. And he did so. And he said to him: Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And going out, he followed him, and he knew not that it was true which was done by the angel: but he thought he saw a vision. And passing through the first and the second ward, they came to the iron gate that leadeth to the city: which of itself opened to them. And going out, they passed on through one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. And Peter coming to himself, said: Now I know in very deed that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

INSTRUCTION. I. This Herod, a grandson of Herod the Great, under whom Christ was born, and who murdered the holy Innocents, was a zealous Jew, and to please the Jews persecuted the Christians. He caused Peter to be imprisoned with the intention of having him publicly executed after Easter, for the amusement of the people. — How shameful it is to do wrong, to murder a man in order to amuse others! See how deeply the desire to please can lead into error! Take care to commit no sin for the sake of pleasing others; for he who seeks to please men cannot be a servant of Christ, says the Apostle Paul. II. The Church, that is, the priests and the faithful, prayed to God continually for the liberation of St. Peter, and their prayers were heard. — Let us pray for one another, especially for sinners, that God may free them from the chains of the evil one. III. Peter slept quietly in prison, for his conscience was at peace, and he confided himself



to God's protection. — The innocent are calm in every peril and need, the bad alone have no peace. IV. God sent an angel to Peter, who told him to rise quickly, gird himself, put on his sandals, and follow him. — If thy guardian angel warns thee to rise from the sleep of sin, do so at once, return to thyself, like the prodigal son, break the bonds that bind thee to sin, gird thyself with the strong resolution to sin no more, put on thy shoes, that is, make the firm purpose to follow Christ.

*(The Gospel as on the Feast of St. Peter's Chair at Rome.)*

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF THE VISITATION OF MARY.

*[July 2.]*



*Why is this festival called the Visitation  
of Mary?*

BECAUSE on this day Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth, whom, as the angel had told her, God had blessed with a son in her old age.

*[The Introit of the Mass is the same as on the festival of the Immaculate Conception.]*

LESSON. (*Cant. ii. 8—14.*) BEHOLD, he cometh, leaping upon the mountains, skipping over the hills: my beloved is like a roe or a young hart. Behold, he standeth behind our wall, looking through the windows, looking through the lattices. Behold, my beloved speaketh to me: Arise, make haste, my love, my dove, my beautiful one, and come. For winter is now past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers have appeared in our land: the time of pruning is come: the voice of the turtle is heard in our land: the fig-tree hath put forth her green figs: the vines in flower yield their sweet smell. Arise, my love, my beautiful one: and come: my dove in the clefts of the





rock, in the hollow places of the wall, show me thy face, let thy voice sound in my ears: for thy voice is sweet, and thy face comely.

EXPLANATION. The Church here applies this lesson to Christ's love for His Mother, from whom He received His flesh. From the beautiful words of this day's lesson, thou mayest, therefore, comprehend the love which Jesus and Mary had for each other, and consider that Jesus so loves thy soul, that He calls on thee to rise up, that is, to leave earthly thoughts, and come to Him, to live for Him only, and entertain thyself in prayer with Him only, like Mary who because of this was so beautiful in His sight.



PETITION. O Jesus, sweet Bridegroom of my soul, come, hasten with Thy grace to visit my soul, that she may be purified and sanctified by Thy love, come prepare her for Thy worthy dwelling, visit me as thou once didst visit with Mary the child John and sanctify him. Do not permit my ears ever to close to Thy warning voice, but grant that I may always obey Thy holy admonitions, and thus become ever more and more pleasing to Thee.

GOSPEL. (*Luke i. 39—47*). AT THAT TIME, Mary rising up, went into the hill-country with haste, into a city of Juda: and she entered into the house of Zachary, and saluted Elizabeth. And it came to pass that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant leaped in her womb: and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost, and she cried out with a loud voice, and said: Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed art thou that hast believed, because those things shall be accomplished that were spoken to thee by the Lord. And Mary said: My soul doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

INSTRUCTION. I. Mary rising up went into the hill-country, and as St. Luke says, with haste: "And tell us now, O Mary," exclaims St. Alphonsus Liguori, "why dost thou hasten so?" "I have a duty to fulfil," she replies, "which the love of my neighbor requires. I go to assist a pious family." — In like manner you also should hasten to carry help and consolation to your neighbor. II. Mary visited her cousin out of true love, not from inconsiderate curiosity or according to the custom of the world. From such motives we should make all our visits. They should aim always only at the honor of God and the spiritual advantage of our fellow-men, they should not come from false



politeness or through bad intentions, which alas! are too often the motives of worldly visits. III. Mary in this visit gives a special example of humility, when she, although the Mother of God, visits the mother of His servant, John, saluting her first, and rendering her for three months the services of a maid. — Learn from Mary, and sincerely ask her to obtain for you the virtue of humility. IV. When Mary was praised by her cousin and called blessed, she turned the praises at once to God and gives Him all the honor. — When we do any good, we should always give the honor to God, not to ourselves, as the prophet says: Not to us, not to us, but to thy name give glory! V. When Mary entered into Zachary's house, wonderful grace entered with her. The infant John leaped for joy, because sanctifying grace was then given to him, before he was born; Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost, and Zachary, St. John's father, was soon to be consoled by regaining the use of speech.

"It is then but true," exclaims St. Alphonsus Ligouri, "that through thy mediation, my Queen and Mother, God's graces are dispensed and souls sanctified! Forget me not, Oh! my beloved Mother Mary, forget not me, thy servant, who loves thee and places in thee all his hopes!"

## EXPLANATION OF THE MAGNIFICAT.

*What does this canticle contain?*

**T**HE praise of God, Mary's gratitude and humility. In it she praises God, and rejoices that He saw the humility of His hand-maid, and made her the Mother of His only-begotten Son, and, therefore, all generations shall call her blessed. She says that God's mercy is great from generation to generation to those that fear Him: He humbles the proud and casts them down from their seat, which they had erected in their conceit, but gives His grace to the humble and exalts them: He richly fills those who hunger and thirst after virtue and heavenly treasures, but lets those who think themselves rich, go away empty; He receives all true Israelites for His worshipers and leads them to salvation, which He promised to their fathers. "God is mighty;" says St. Augustine, "if thou exaltest thyself, He turns from thee; if thou humblest thyself, He descends to thee."

SUPPLICATION. O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God! who didst descend from the heights



of heaven into the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, didst remain for nine months in it, deigning to visit and sanctify St. John through her, grant, that we may participate, through the practice of good works and especially of humility, in the fruits of Thy holy Incarnation.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. WILLIBALD, BISHOP.

[July 7.]



**S**T. WILLIBALD came from England, was the son of St. Richard the King, and brother of St. Winnibald and St. Walburga, and a near relative of St. Boniface, the Apostle of Germany. When he was three years old, he was attacked by a dangerous illness, his parents laid him before a crucifix, vowing, if he recovered, to devote their beloved child to the Lord. Their prayers were heard. The pious parents always looked upon their boy as a special gift of heaven, and had him educated in the Monastery of Waltheim, where he advanced in charming innocence, learned rapidly, and distinguished himself by his interior piety. Thousands of Catholics at that time made pilgrimages to the graves of SS. Peter and Paul the Apostles, at Rome, and the ardent desire to make this pilgrimage, there to serve God in quiet solitude, was awakened in the heart of the pious youth Willibald. He went, accompanied by his saintly father and his brother Winnibald; but the father died on the way. Willibald buried him, and then prosecuting his journey arrived at Rome on St. Martin's day in the year 721. Willibald and his brother visited with fervent devotion all the sacred places in the city, especially the graves of the martyrs, and received the habit of a religious. He soon after made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, where he suffered many trials, and after seven years returned to Italy, and for some time led a holy, peaceful life in the celebrated Benedictine Monastery, Mount Casino. God now wished to put his light upon an elevation, so that he might show others the way to heaven.



In the year 738 St. Boniface went to Rome to visit Pope Gregory III., and there met St. Willibald, the sanctity of whose face so impressed St. Boniface, that he besought the pope to permit him to have the young saint as an assistant in his apostolic labors in Germany. The pope granted this request, and Willibald accompanied his saintly cousin to Germany, where he was ordained priest, and at the request of St. Boniface preached the Lord Jesus Christ to the benighted heathens of the province of Germany. Willibald commenced his labors with the greatest zeal; he preached in Bavaria and Franconia, but especially in Eichstadt, where, at that time, there was but a chapel and a few huts, for the Huns had destroyed the city. He labored untiringly for the salvation of souls, and God was with him; the seed he sowed bloomed gloriously, and Boniface had the satisfaction of founding the diocese of Eichstadt, of which Willibald was consecrated the first bishop in the year 741. As bishop, Willibald redoubled his activity, he planted the seed of the word of God untiringly in all hearts, gathered pious priests from religious orders around him, and with them spread the richest blessings far and wide. He founded a monastery and a convent of the rule of St. Benedict, at Heidenheim; one for his brother Winnibald, and the other for his sister Walburga, to which he often retired, that he might pray in solitude and collect new strength for his work. He gave the priests and the faithful the most beautiful example; his meekness and patience were inexhaustible, his zeal indefatigable, his love of the poor boundless. He possessed a special gift of consoling and comforting the afflicted; his fasting was rigorous, nor did he allow himself any indulgence even in illness, or old age. Finally, after unceasing labor, and full of desire to behold God, he died, rich in virtue, at Eichstadt, on the 7th of July, 786, at the age of eighty-seven years. His sacred remains rest in a handsome church, which Bishop Hildebrand caused to be built in that city, in 1270.

*The Introit, Epistle and Gospel, as on the Feast of St. Nicholas, December 6th.*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee almighty God, that we who venerate the solemnities of blessed Willibald, Thy confessor and bishop, may be aided by his intercessions with Thee. Thro'. &c.

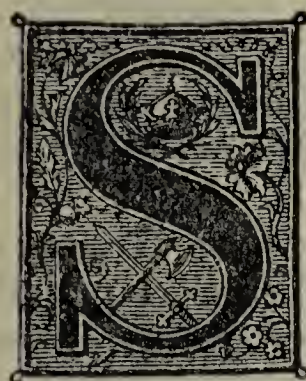
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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. KILIAN, BISHOP AND MARTYR.

[July 8.]

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**S**T. KILIAN was born in Ireland of noble parents, who according to the custom of that time had him educated at a monastery, where he was brought up in the fear of God, and his mind at the same time well cultivated in the sciences. He received the habit of the Benedictines, and was ordained priest. In his quiet cell he meditated often on the infinite love of the divine Redeemer who to save sinners became man and died on the cross for us, until the ardent desire was aroused in the saint to carry the message of salvation to those nations to whom Jesus and his love were entirely unknown, and to win their hearts for Christ. With this intention he left his native country, his parents and friends, about the year 685, and with eleven companions who shared his intentions, crossed the sea and safely landed in France, but not to stay there, for Kilian's aim was Germany, where the most abominable idolatry still reigned. He reached the neighborhood of Würzburg, where he settled with the priest Colman and the deacon Totnan, and planted the cross on one of the neighboring hills which to this day is called the Mount of the Cross.

The old Franks were devoted to war and the chase, they lived in gloomy forests, dressed in the skin of animals, supported themselves by plunder and the chase, and worshiped, under the name of Hulda, Diana, goddess of hunting; they offered their sacrifices, which were often human beings, to their idols under great oaks. The light of Christianity had, it is true, once penetrated to them from France, but it had been soon extinguished, and the dark night of paganism completely enveloped their beautiful country.

As soon as Kilian and his companions had learned the language of the country, made themselves acquainted with its customs, and had seen what a rich harvest could be reaped by preaching the gospel there, he went to Rome to Cono, who was Pope at that time, to obtain authority to preach the gospel. Cono received him with pleasure, granted his request, consecrated him bishop, and dismissed him with his blessing.



In the inclement season of the winter of 687 the saint returned to Würzburg, and immediately commenced the holy work. He preached the word of the Lord to the ignorant with heavenly eloquence, and God blessed his zeal. A great number received baptism. Among these was the Duke of Franconia, named Theobald, who became converted to Christ, and received in baptism the name Gozbert; his subjects followed his example, and in the places where sacrifices smoked on the altars of idols, Kilian had the joy of seeing the cross erected and the purest and holiest offering made to the true God.

But his joy was soon overshadowed. Duke Gozbert had married his sister-in-law, Geilana, and Kilian required the duke to separate, as the marriage was unlawful. The duke promised to comply, but his passionate, impious wife would not hear of a divorce, resolved on the death of the saint, and in the absence of the duke who was engaged in a war, hired two barbarians to murder Kilian and his companions. The night before his death, Kilian had a vision, by which he was made aware that his death was at hand. He called his companions, and said: "Let us prepare ourselves for the coming of the Lord, He is at the door." Then they all three prayed and recommended their souls to the Lord, and behold, about midnight the assassins rushed into the saint's dwelling. Kilian bravely met them, and with his companions fearlessly received the deathblow; this was in the year 689. To conceal the shameful deed, the bodies of the slain and their priestly garments and the sacred vessels were thrown into a pit; but the just God brought the whole to light. One of the murderers became insane, and ran through the streets of the city in a frenzy, crying out: "O Kilian, Kilian! how horribly thou dost persecute me. I see the sword red with thy blood, hanging over my head!" and then, tearing his flesh with his teeth, he died a most agonizing death. The other murderer stabbed himself with his own sword. Geilana became a lunatic and came to a fearful end. The remains of the holy martyrs were found and brought by Bishop Burchard to the Cathedral of Würzburg.

The Introit of the Mass on his Feast reads: The salvation of the just is from the Lord: and He is their protector in the time of trouble. (*Ps.* xxxvi.) Be not emulous of evil doers: nor envy them that work iniquity. Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who dost gladden us with the yearly solemnity of Thy holy



martyrs Kieran, Colman and Totnan, mercifully grant, that as we rejoice in their merits, we may be inflamed by their examples. Thro'. &c.

*The Epistle is the same as on the Feast of St. Sebastian, and the Gospel as on the Feast of All Saints.*

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FESTIVAL OF THE SCAPULAR.

*[Third Sunday in July.]*



HIS festival was sanctioned in the year 1587 by Pope Sixtus V. for the Order of Carmelites; after some time it was celebrated, by permission of several popes, in many Christian countries, and was finally, in the year 1726, ordered by Pope Benedict XIV. to be observed in the whole Church.

This festival has two names arising from its history and origin: The Festival of the Scapular, or the Feast in Commemoration of the Blessed Virgin of Mount Carmel. The first comes from the legend that in the beginning of the thirteenth century the sixth general of the Carmelite Order, Simon Stock, received the scapular\* (shoulder dress) from the Blessed Virgin, which would be to him and to all who carried it, a badge of her special protection, and that Mary afterwards appeared to Pope John XXII. and advised him to give more indulgences to this Order than he had already granted in 1322. The second name is given, because this festival originated in the Carmelite Order, which even in the time of the apostles had a monastery on Mount Carmel, hence the name Carmelite. From this originated the Confraternity of the Scapular, as it is called, whose members oblige themselves to venerate the Blessed Virgin Mary in a special manner, and under her protection to work out their salvation by a pious life. They wear a scapular with the picture of the Blessed Virgin imprinted upon it, and daily recite certain prayers. The Church, therefore, has the decided intention,

\* This scapular consists of two small pieces of cloth with pictures of the Blessed Virgin upon them, which are blessed, and worn over the shoulders, hanging upon the breast and back.



by the observance of this Feast and by the existence of this Confraternity, to direct and encourage the faithful anew properly to honor the Mother of our Saviour, and to seek her powerful intercession, so that they may find eternal salvation. It is to be observed that the wearing of a blessed scapular does not secure eternal happiness; this is gained only by a faithful, pious, Christian life, by the love of God and of our neighbor.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who hast honored the Carmelite order with the peculiar title of the most Blessed ever-Virgin Mary Thy Mother: mercifully grant, that as we this day celebrate her commemoration with a solemn office, so we may be defended by her protecting power, and be found worthy to attain to everlasting joys. Thro'. &c.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN.

[*July 22.*]



ACCORDING to the old and settled tradition of the Church, St. Mary Magdalen was the sister of Martha and Lazarus, and was that sinner who anointed the Saviour's feet. She was moved to penance by the sermons of Jesus, and on account of her deep, true, loving sorrow, her sins were forgiven, and she became henceforth the most faithful and zealous servant of the Lord. She was one of those women who continually accompanied our Lord and served him according to her ability. She stood with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and Mary, the wife of Cleophas, under the cross; she was the first at the sepulchre after the Sabbath, and there saw Jesus, whom she thought to be the gardener, until He kindly made Himself known to her, and commanded her to announce the news of His resurrection to the apostles and the remainder of the disciples, and to tell them that He would ascend to His and their God. From the time that Magdalen hastened to the apostles with the joyful message of the Lord, the gospel makes no further mention of her, and the approved me-



morials of Church History do not mention anything certain of her; but that she was accepted among the happy children of God, is testified to by the Church which celebrates her feast on this day.

In the Introit of the Mass, the Church exclaims in Magdalen's name: The wicked have waited for me to destroy me: I have understood Thy testimonies, O Lord: I have seen an end of all perfection: Thy commandment is exceeding broad. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. (*Ps. cxviii.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. May we be assisted, we beseech Thee, O Lord, by the prayers of Blessed Mary Magdalen: moved by whose supplication, Thou didst raise from the grave alive her brother Lazarus, after he had been four days dead. Who liveth &c.

LESSON. (*Cant. iii. 2—5, viii. 6—7.*) I will rise, and will go about the city: in the streets and the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, and I found him not. The watchmen who keep the city found me. Have you seen him whom my soul loveth? When I had a little passed by them, I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and I will not let him go till I bring him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that bore me. I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes and harts of the fields, that you stir not up, nor wake my beloved till she please. Put me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thy arm: for love is strong as death, jealousy is hard as hell; the lamps thereof are lamps of fire and flames. Many waters cannot quench charity, neither can the floods drown it: if a man shall give all the substance of his house for love, he shall despise it as nothing.

EXPLANATION. The holy Fathers understand by the bride in this lesson, the soul which seeks her bridegroom Jesus. She arises from the bed of long negligence, and examines in her mind the city of God, that is, the Church; she meditates on the lives of the saints, trying by follow-



ing them to find Him whom she loves, but she does not find Him at once. She comes to the watchmen of the city, the vicars, pastors, confessors of the Church, who are ordered by God to lead the erring ones to Jesus. She asks of them, where and how she can find her loved One, and when she has found Him, she encloses Him in her deepest heart and is careful never to lose Him again. And the soul that lives in Jesus, feels so sweet a repose, that she, so to speak, falls into a deep sleep, in which nothing earthly disturbs her, and whosoever rests in God finds peaceful quiet. He requires of her to imprint His love like a seal on her heart and on her arms, that is, to think of Him continually and perform all for love of Him. This love is strong as death, consuming everything, and as jealous for God as a glowing fire; the light of faith must ever burn in the heart, and affliction, temptation, or trials must not diminish or extinguish the affection. The soul inspired by such love, submits itself entirely to God, and openly shows her love by brave deeds. Such a love had Magdalen, and for such a love we should daily pray, following her example.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* vii. 36—50.) AT THAT TIME, one of the Pharisees desired Jesus to eat with him: and he went into the house of the Pharisee, and sat down to meat. And behold, a woman that was in the city, a sinner, when she knew that he sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment; and standing behind at his feet, she began to wash his feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. And the Pharisee who had invited him seeing it, spoke within himself, saying: This man, if he were a prophet, would know surely who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: that she is a sinner. And Jesus answering, said to him: Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee. But he said: Master, say it. A certain creditor had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And whereas they had not wherewith to pay, he forgave them both. Which therefore of the



two loveth him most? Simon answering said: I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And he said to him: Thou hast judged rightly. And turning to the woman, he said unto Simon: Dost thou see this woman? I entered into thy house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she with tears hath washed my feet, and with her hairs hath wiped them. Thou gavest me no kiss: but she, since she came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but she with ointment hath anointed my feet. Wherefore I say to thee: Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much. But to whom less is forgiven, he loveth less. And he said to her: Thy sins are forgiven thee. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves: Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman: Thy faith hath made thee safe: go in peace.

*Why was Magdalen so publicly penitent?*

Because she had been a public sinner. — It is not enough for one who has committed sins before others and given public scandal to do penance in private, but he must strive by public good example to repair the scandal he has given.

*Why did Magdalen stand behind at the Saviour's feet?*

She did so because of her shame for the sins with which she was stained, not venturing to appear before His face. — O that we, too, would throw ourselves in spirit in salutary fear at Christ's feet, and follow His footsteps into the right path!

*Why did Magdalen not confess her sins, but only weep over them?*

St. Ambrose says, she did not confess her sins with words, it is true, but with the heart and many contrite tears, for she knew well that tears are far more powerful than words to efface sin. It was, besides, not necessary to confess to Christ, the Omniscient, and confession was not then established.



We learn from this that simply confessing our sins in words does not suffice, but that we must weep over them with tears of penance, or, at least, have interior sorrow and detestation of them.

*Why did she wash the feet of Jesus, kiss them, dry them with her hair, and anoint them?*

She thus offered to God that which she had abused, says St. Gregory. Her eyes had languished for earthly things, she now punishes them with penitential tears; her hair had been used to delight her eyes, and she uses it to wipe away the tears; her lips had spoken idle words, and with them she kisses the Saviour's feet; the ointment had been used in sinful ways, and now it serves to anoint Christ in advance of His burial. (*Matt. xxvi. 12.*)

Here we have a true model of real penance. Everything which has served us to sin should be offered to God by mortification, and we should especially use the means, which have occasioned so many sins for the poor, who are represented by the feet of the Lord.

*Why did Christ so willingly forgive Magdalen her sins?*

Because she loved much. He who truly loves is grieved from the heart for having offended the loved one; it is because we do not truly love God that we so seldom at confession have real contrition for our sins. We should, therefore, daily pray for the love of God, for St. Gregory says that the more the heart of the sinner glows with the ardent fire of love, the more the rust of sin will be consumed.

*Why did Jesus say: Thy faith hath made thee safe?*

Because Jesus meant by faith a faith that is active in love. A true, living faith can not be without love, as true love can not exist without faith.

PRAYER. O Jesus! I fall with Magdalen at Thy feet, and accuse myself of having shamefully abused the favors with which Thou hast so paternally blessed me in body and soul. I have so badly spent the time of my past life, that I am not worthy to raise my eyes to heaven. But ah! to whom shall I turn, from whom shall I seek help and comfort if not from Thee, O sweetest Jesus, who only came into the world to seek out the sinners and make them happy! Give me,



therefore, a zealous will to avoid evil, and to turn to Thee, my Highest Good, and out of true love be sorry for my sins, beware of them in future, avoid all evil occasions, all that incites to sin, and repair by the practice of good works the time I have hitherto lost. Grant me this, O Lord Jesus, by Thy bitter passion and death, and by the intercession of St. Mary Magdalen, the penitent. Amen.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. JAMES, THE GREATER, APOSTLE.

*[July 25.]*



JAMES, born in Galilee, son of Zebedee and Salome, and a relation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, was a fisherman like his brother John, and one of the first of the apostles called by Christ. He left everything to follow the Lord, and with Peter and John was favored by Christ with special confidence. He was present when Christ was glorified on Mount Thabor, when He healed Peter's mother-in-law of the fever, raised the daughter of Jairus to life, and when He suffered the unutterable terror of death on Mount Olivet; he was also, with the rest of the apostles, a witness of Christ's ascension, received with them the Holy Ghost on Pentecost, and then preached the gospel in Judea and the neighborhood of Jerusalem. He and his brother John were called by Christ the Sons of Thunder, on account of their great zeal for the honor and kingdom of God. When James with this thunderlike zeal continued to preach the resurrection and the doctrine of Jesus in Judea, the Jews were so enraged against him that King Herod thought nothing would please them more than that he should condemn the apostle to death; this he did at Easter in the year of our Lord 44. But when the one who led him to execution saw the firmness of his faith, he also became converted to Christ, and both were therefore led to death. On the way he prayed the apostle to forgive him, who said to him: "Peace be with you!" and kissed him. Both were beheaded. This James was the first of the apostles to shed



his blood for Jesus, and to drink of the chalice of suffering. His sacred remains were afterwards brought to Compostella in Spain. The Church celebrates his feast on the day of his translation, and not on the day of his martyrdom, which, as already said, was at Easter.

*The Introit of the Mass is the same as on the Feast of St. Andrew.*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Be Thou, O Lord, to Thy people their sanctifier and defender: that, being strengthened by the patronage of Thy apostle James, they may both please Thee in holy conversation and serve Thee with a tranquil mind. Thro' &c.

LESSON. (i. Cor. iv. 9—15.) BRETHREN, I think that God hath set forth us apostles, the last, as it were men appointed to death: we are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ: we are weak, but you are strong: you are honorable, but we without honor. Even unto this hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no fixed abode, and we labor, working with our own hands: we are reviled, and we bless: we are persecuted, and we suffer it: we are blasphemed, and we entreat: we are made as the refuse of this world, the offscouring of all even until now. I write not these things to confound you, but I admonish you as my dearest children. For if you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet not many fathers. For in Christ Jesus, by the gospel I have begotten you.

EXPLANATION. Paul here teaches, how little apostolic men are regarded in this world. They are in the world as on a stage, and are treated by the impious world with contempt, but are a most pleasing sight in the eyes of God and His angels. So it is with true Christians also; for he who lives according to the commandments is looked upon as a fool by the world; but those who travel in the world's ways, who devote themselves to the world's principles and customs are held as wise and reasonable men. The true Christian has no place of rest, the unjust persecute



him on all sides, but he patiently bears all for love of God; if he is reproached and abused, he prays for those who abuse him, and blesses them.

If you seek to be a true Christian you must not be ashamed because the world despises and opposes your virtuous Christian life, calling you foolish and showing you enmity. Only recall how the same has been the lot of the apostles, even of Christ Himself; how they entered heaven only through suffering, trials and many persecutions. Woe to you, if you seek to enter it by other paths!

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xx, 20—23.) AT THAT TIME, the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Jesus with her sons, worshipping, and asking something of him. Who said to her: What wilt thou? She saith to him: Say that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom. And Jesus answering, said: You know not what you ask. Can you drink the chalice that I shall drink? They say to him: We can. He saith to them: My chalice indeed you shall drink: but to sit on my right or left hand is not mine to give to you, but to them for whom it is prepared by my Father.

*What did this mother ask for her sons from Christ?*

That in Christ's kingdom in heaven, her sons should rank next to the Lord Himself, and be above all the other apostles.

In the same manner those parents act who seek to make their children enter the clerical state, often forcing them to it, without considering whether they have a vocation or not, or are fitted for the position. Hence it often happens that such priests are unhappy and make others also unhappy, because they have mistaken their vocation.

*Why did Christ say: You know not what you ask?*

Because the mother and her children were most unreasonable in their request, requiring a thing so great without considering whether they were worthy of it.

This reproach is also deserved by those who, in vain pride and over-weening self-esteem, seek high positions without thinking about the honor of God and what is really best for their own and their neighbor's salvation.



*What is meant by the chalice which Christ mentions?*

The chalice of pain and suffering which He, and later His disciples also, must drink, and of which every one must partake who wishes to reach heaven with Christ.

*Did these disciples drink it?*

Yes, for James suffered a martyr's death, and John endured many trials and persecutions until he reached a very great age.

*Why did Christ say: To sit on my right or left hand is not mine to give to you?*

By this Christ meant that He, since they were so aspiring, could not grant this desire, and that this grace is given by His Father only to the humble, for He judges not by the person but by the merits. At the same time Christ, who had come to teach all men by precept and example the beautiful virtue of humility, wished to refuse the honor of bestowing dignities, and give it to His Father, to whom He ever sought to refer all glory.

PRAYER TO ST. JAMES. O brave apostle, the first to drink the chalice of suffering after the example of Christ who had shed His blood for thee, obtain, I beseech thee, the grace from Him, that I may not fear to drink of the chalice of pain and suffering, but may bear patiently all that the hand of my God offers me, so that I may be one day worthy to enjoy in thy society the joy of heaven.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. ANNE, MOTHER OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

*(July 26.)*



ACCORDING to old traditions, the saintly mother of the Blessed Virgin, whose name Anne, signifies grace, was descended on her father's side from the tribe of Levi, and on her mother's from the tribe of Juda. She was born in Bethlehem and was married, while still a pure and pious virgin, to Joachim, a man of position, with whom she lived, occupied in pious works, and patiently conforming to the will of God in all



things. When this pious couple had reached a very advanced age, in which they could scarcely expect to have children, an angel announced to them that they were to be blessed with a daughter whom they were to name Mary. And it occurred as foretold. In the summer following the announcement, was born the holiest of God's creatures, the Queen of angels and of men, the chosen Mother of the Son of God, not so much the fruit of the body as she was the fruit of grace. Joachim and Anne brought this child Mary, at a very tender age, to Jerusalem, presenting her to the high-priest as an offering to God, to be brought up in the service of the temple. How long Anne lived after this sacrifice is not known, but she is now enthroned among the elect in heaven with her beloved child in glory.

At the Introit of the Mass the Church sings: Let us all rejoice in the Lord, celebrating a festival day in honor of blessed Anne, on whose solemnity the angels rejoice, and praise the Son of God. My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the King. (*Ps. xliv.*) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who wast pleased to confer thy grace upon blessed Anne, whereby she merited to become the mother of her who brought forth Thine only-begotten Son: mercifully grant that, in like manner as we celebrate her solemnity, so we may be aided by her patronage. Thro.' &c.

LESSON. (*Prov. xxxi. 10—31.*) Who shall find a valiant woman? the price of her is as of things from afar, and from the uttermost coasts. The heart of her husband trusteth in her, and he shall have no need of spoils. She will render him good and not evil all the days of her life. She hath sought wool and flax, and hath wrought by the counsel of her hands. She is like the merchant's ship, she bringeth her bread from afar. And she hath risen in the night, and given prey to her household, and victuals to her maidens. She hath considered a field, and bought it: with the fruit of her hands she hath planted a vineyard. She hath girded her loins with strength, and hath strengthened her arm. She hath tasted and seen that her



traffic is good: her lamp shall not be put out in the night. She hath put out her hand to strong things, and her fingers have taken hold of the spindle. She hath opened her hand to the needy, and stretched out her hands to the poor. She shall not fear for her house in the cold of snow: for all her domestics are clothed with double garments. She hath made for herself clothing of tapestry: fine linen and purple is her covering. Her husband is honorable in the gates, when he sitteth among the senators of the land. She made fine linen and sold it; and delivered a girdle to the Chanaanite. Strength and beauty are her clothing, and she shall laugh in the latter day. She hath opened her mouth to wisdom, and the law of clemency is on her tongue. She hath looked well to the paths of her house, and hath not eaten her bread idle. Her children rose up and called her blessed: her husband, and he praised her. Many daughters have gathered together riches: thou hast surpassed them all. Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain; the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.

INSTRUCTION. This lesson gives us the model of a noble mistress of a family, who, to say all in a word, labors day and night for the bodily and spiritual, temporal and eternal welfare of herself and of those belonging to her. The Holy Ghost Himself presents us this beautiful model. Would that all women would take example therefrom! But there are, alas! many who seek honor only in their beauty, dress and vanity, who have no occupation but that of attending to their delicate bodies, eating, drinking and sleeping; who count their domestic cares last of all, who neglect their children and the members of their household, leaving them to fate, even vex them and tempt them to sin by their pride and obstinacy, who squander their husband's means, and bring him to poverty and distress. How far do such women stand below the mistress of whom the lesson says that she surpasses all in riches, that is, in virtue and good works! And they shall receive no such



reward as hers, and their works instead of praising them, shall call down God's judgment upon them. Woe to them, who as Christians, as mistresses of the house, might have prevented so much wrong and have done so much good, and did not! Woe to them, they shall be cast into outer darkness!

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xiii. 44—52.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke this parable to his disciples: The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in a field: which a man having found, hid it, and for joy thereof goeth, and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like to a merchant seeking good pearls. Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went his way, and sold all that he had, and bought it. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like to a net cast into the sea, and gathering together of all kinds of fishes. Which, when it was filled, they drew out, and sitting by the shore, they chose out the good into vessels, but the bad they cast forth. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Have ye understood all these things? They say to him: Yes. He said unto them: Therefore every scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like to a man who is a householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure new things and old.

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# INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA,

FOUNDER OF THE "SOCIETY OF JESUS."

[July 31.]



**S**T. IGNATIUS was born in 1491, at the castle of Loyola, in the northern part of Spain. His parents were good, pious, virtuous Christians of noble blood. After the early death of his mother, one of his aunts took him in her charge, and procured for him an education in the court of Ferdinand V., in quality of page to the king; his first military exploits were performed under Antony Manriquez, Duke of Najara.

In the war against France Ignatius was made commander of the fortified town of Pampeluna, capital of Navarre, where he defended himself with heroic courage, as long as he could; he was wounded severely in the right leg by a cannon ball and with him fell the town. The French, admiring his valor, generously dismissed him; he was brought to the castle of Loyola in a litter. Being arrived there he felt great pain, for the bones had been ill set; the surgeons therefore considered it necessary to break his leg again in order to have it well arranged. By this operation he became so weak that his life was despaired of, but he was cured in a miraculous manner by St. Peter, who appeared to him in the night, and touched him, whereupon he was restored to perfect health. There was, however, a protuberance left under his knee, and his right leg remained shorter than the left; he, therefore, would by all means have the physician amend this in some way; it was attempted by a machine with which his leg was stretched with great violence. The excessive pains which he experienced, pressed no sigh from the lips of Ignatius.

Being confined to bed, though otherwise perfectly healthy, time grew tedious to him and he desired to read something of knight romances. No such book was found in the castle, and instead of them the servant brought him the "Life of our Saviour and of the Saints." This book pleased him exceedingly; he would read in it for a time, put it aside, but soon take it up again, so much delight did he take in it. In consequence of this reading he was irresistibly moved to imitate the saints, and he actually resolved to do so, in order with them to please and possess





God. Every night he would rise to pray for some time, although he was still suffering much pain; he very soon formed the intention of leaving the world altogether, in order to follow the example of the saints more closely; and he executed the resolution as soon as he had entirely recovered.

It was in March, 1522, that Ignatius, clad in full armor and on horseback, ascended to the celebrated Benedictine monastery of Montserrat, where a miraculous image of the Blessed Virgin was much venerated. His first care was to make to the saintly monk, John Chanones, a general confession, which was often interrupted by the abundance of his tears. He had begged for and obtained permission to remain in the church during the night. Before entering, however, he changed his bright suit of clothes for a long coat of coarse cloth, a girdle and a pair of sandals, procuring also a pilgrim's staff, as he intended to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. He then spent the whole night in most ardent prayer, shedding a flood of tears before the altar of the Blessed Virgin. In the morning he received the



holy Eucharist, and on the same day left the mount, bequeathing his fine horse to the monastery, and leaving his arms at the altar of the Blessed Virgin, in testimony of his renouncing the secular warfare to assume that of Christ.

Coming to Barcelona, whence he intended to set out for Jerusalem, not finding a ship there he at once set out for Manresa, where for the sake of Jesus, he assisted the afflicted in the hospital, at the same time pitilessly mortifying himself and suffering with meekest patience all that others did to molest or injure him. His holy life could not remain hidden from others, and he soon noticed what thoughts were entertained about him. But Ignatius sought only the honor and glory of God, so he fled hence, and selected a cave about half a mile from Manresa for his habitation. Here he passed several days and nights without any food, at the same time increasing his mortifications to such a degree, that he was found actually half dead by some persons, who then carried him back to Manresa. He soon recovered from his bodily afflictions, but to undergo the far more excruciating ones of the soul. He was overwhelmed with bitter sadness, and he would have despaired and committed suicide, had he not feared to offend God. Soon his tranquility of mind was restored, and his soul began to overflow with spiritual joy, and, truly, the fruit he began to reap was of incalculable value to him and the many whom, by the will of God, he was to guide in the future. It was at Manresa, that he wrote his "Spiritual Exercises" and formed the plan of the "Society of Jesus."

Ignatius now intended earnestly to fulfil his project of visiting the Holy Land. Accordingly he sailed from Barcelona to Rome, thence to Venice, where a captain kindly took him aboard not demanding any pay from him. He arrived at Jerusalem after much toil, which, however, was more than amply rewarded by the sweetest consolations, which he experienced at the holy places. He desired to remain at Jerusalem, but according to the advice of the Provincial of the Franciscans he returned to Spain.

Thus far God had wonderfully led and instructed him and He now urged him to accomplish his plan of instituting a Society, to the greater glory of God and the salvation of human souls. But Ignatius felt himself deficient in all profane knowledge, and he thought it not too humiliating to frequent a common college, though 35 years of age.

During his course of studies God overwhelmed him with many graces, to which Ignatius in turn corresponded with a most ardent love; he would often be heard to cry out: "O God, my Love, and the Delight of my soul, if men



knew Thee, they could never offend Thee! O my God, how good Thou art to bear with such a sinner as I am!" After two years of study at Barcelona he went to the university of Alcala, where he took up lodging in a hospital. Here, he studied diligently, though he felt an aversion to studies; he soon suspended them in order to render immediate service to the sick and poor, to instruct children in their religion, and to institute spiritual conferences, according to the inspirations which he felt. In this way he succeeded indeed in gaining many to the cause of Jesus, but, on the other hand, he caused himself a number of enemies, as his mode of life was a continued reproach to that of others; he was even obliged to leave Alcala.

Ignatius now proceeded to Valencia, where he went to the Archbishop in order to render an account of his life. The Archbishop received him with paternal love and encouraged his holy zeal; he advised Ignatius to go to Salamanca there to finish his studies. Nor could he here confine himself to studies alone; he undertook to instruct in holy ways such students and sinners as would stop to listen to him. Very frequently he spoke in public, and in a short time there was great excitement all over the city; — but alas, the poor beggar preacher was compelled to leave Salamanca also.

He next came to the conclusion to finish his studies at Paris, where he made the hospital of St. James his home. Daily he attended lectures, and on his way to and fro he would beg alms for himself, which was a great loss of time to him. According to the advice of his confessor he turned to wealthy Spaniards, who kindly assisted him with money, so that he was without care and need. Thus he gained much time for studies and other good works. Meanwhile the thought of executing his holy plan matured in his mind; he, therefore, spoke of it to several young men, and his words did not fail to leave a deep impression upon them.

Among the celebrated doctors at the university of Paris, was Francis Xavier, a young Spanish nobleman; Ignatius fixed his eye specially upon him. But vain glory on the part of Xavier, and low poverty on the part of Ignatius, were obstacles not easily to be overcome. Ignatius knew that Xavier was destined to be a special vessel of election, and, therefore, he spoke to him on every possible occasion. Xavier could not resist; the grace of God bore him onward, and it is known all the world over what a Saint he became. Besides the truly noble Xavier, Ignatius had gained six other companions, who were all inflamed with the zeal of laboring in the cause of God.







The Assumption of our Blessed Lady, in 1534, was the day set apart for instituting that for which he had so long and zealously labored. Peter Faber, or Le Fevre, Ignatius' first follower, shortly before ordained, said holy Mass in a subterranean chapel on Montmartre, at which Ignatius and his companions assisted. Before holy Communion Faber turned to them, with the holy Host in his hand, then all singly pronounced their vows of perpetual chastity and voluntary poverty, and promised to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land within a year after finishing their studies; should the latter turn out impossible, they vowed to go to the Holy Father, the Pope, and leave themselves at his entire disposal, binding themselves also never to accept any ecclesiastical dignities or any reward for their labors, unless compelled by a superior will.

In 1537 the Venetians declared war against the Turks, and it was found impracticable to go to Jerusalem. To fulfil their vow, Ignatius and two of his companions went to the Pope to offer themselves for whatever work he should judge best.

Paul III. received them graciously; he appointed Faber to teach scholastic divinity at the Sapienza in Rome and Laynez to explain the holy Scriptures, whilst Ignatius labored to reform the manners of the people.

Meanwhile three cardinals examined the project of founding the society which they opposed at first, but soon afterwards agreed to. Paul III., in a bull dated September 27th, 1540, approved it under the name of "Society of Jesus." Ignatius was obliged to be the first general; he immediately set about to write constitutions and rules for the Society, in which he designed as scope, first, self-sanctification, and secondly, instruction and sanctification of others. To effect the latter the Jesuits opened their first school in 1546, in the college which St. Francis Borgia had built at Gaudia; soon other schools flourished under the direction of this Society, and no one can ignore the immense good that came from them, especially in those times of the so-called Reformation.

To professors and scholars St. Ignatius recommended nothing so much as to dedicate their labors with the greatest fervor "all to the greater glory of God;" his prudence and love shown in his whole conduct to his religious and failed not to win all hearts. He exhibited the affection of a most tender parent to all, especially to the sick, for whom he was solicitous to procure all possible and bodily comfort.

Besides his activity at home, it is astonishing what enterprises he would undertake abroad, establishing his order everywhere; it is wonderful to see the energy with



which he bore so continued a burden: he was visibly assisted by the hand of our Lord, who knows how to accomplish even the greatest things through the weakest instruments. For such assistance from God Ignatius could not be ungrateful, but he had Him always and in all things present in his mind; every object served him as a book wherein he read the divine perfections, and by this means he kept his soul ever raised to God. He enjoyed, as it were, an undisturbed union with God, and often was he favored with raptures, visions and revelations. It was indeed a matter of the greatest importance to St. Ignatius to remain ever united to God in undisturbed peace, and to this effect he overcame all obstacles by an unlimited obedience to his directors and by a most profound humility, besides the severe mortifications which he underwent in many other things. Even when weakened by age and infirmity, the saint declared that if his Holiness demanded it, he would immediately step aboard the first ship, though it had neither sails nor rudder, to set out for any port of the globe—so much had he subjected his will to that of others! Even to inferiors he would submit with wonderful meekness, provided he could do so without prejudice to his authority. He received rebukes from others with cheerfulness and thanks, but if anything was said in his praise, he would become confused and often weep. Thus had he built upon humility, the characteristic of all saints.

St. Ignatius was general of the Society for fifteen years, three months and nine days, but in the end was so worn out by infirmities that he begged for an assistant, to which office Jerome Nadal was appointed. After this St. Ignatius applied himself to the care of the sick, and the rest of his time he spent in continual prayer and in preparing himself for death. The day before his death he begged to obtain his Holiness' blessing for the moment of death, though no one else apprehended any danger. The next morning, lifting eyes and hands to heaven and pronouncing, both with tongue and heart, the sweet name of Jesus, with a serene countenance, he gave up his happy soul into the hands of his Creator on the last day of July, 1556, in the 65th year of his age. He was esteemed a saint, when in life, and after death numerous miracles confirmed the opinion. He was accordingly beatified by Paul V., 1609, and canonized by Gregory XV. in 1622, though the bull was not published until 1623 by Urban VIII.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who, to extend the greater glory of Thy name, hast, through



blessed Ignatius, strengthened Thy Church militant with the addition of a new force: grant that, following his example, and assisted by his help, we may so fight the fight of faith on earth, that we may merit to be crowned with him in heaven. Who livest &c.

EPISTLE. (ii. *Tim.* ii. 8—10.; iii. 10—12.) DEARLY BELOVED: Be mindful that the Lord Jesus Christ is risen again from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel, wherein I labor even unto bonds, as an evil doer: but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with heavenly glory. But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, patience, persecutions, afflictions: such as came upon me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra: what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord delivered me. And all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* x. 1—9.) AT THAT TIME, the Lord appointed other seventy-two: and he sent them two and two before his face into every city and place whither he himself was to come. And he said to them: The harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send laborers into his harvest. Go, behold I send you as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse nor scrip, nor shoes, and salute no man by the way. Into whatever house you enter, first say: Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon him: but if not, it shall return to you. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they have: for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Remove not from house to house. And into what city soever you enter, and



they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: and heal the sick that are therein, and say to them: The kingdom of God is nigh unto you.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. ALPHONSUS MARIA LIGUORI,

BISHOP OF ST. AGATHA OF THE GOTHES, IN ITALY,  
FOUNDER OF THE CONGREGATION OF OUR MOST HOLY REDEEMER.

*[August 2.]*

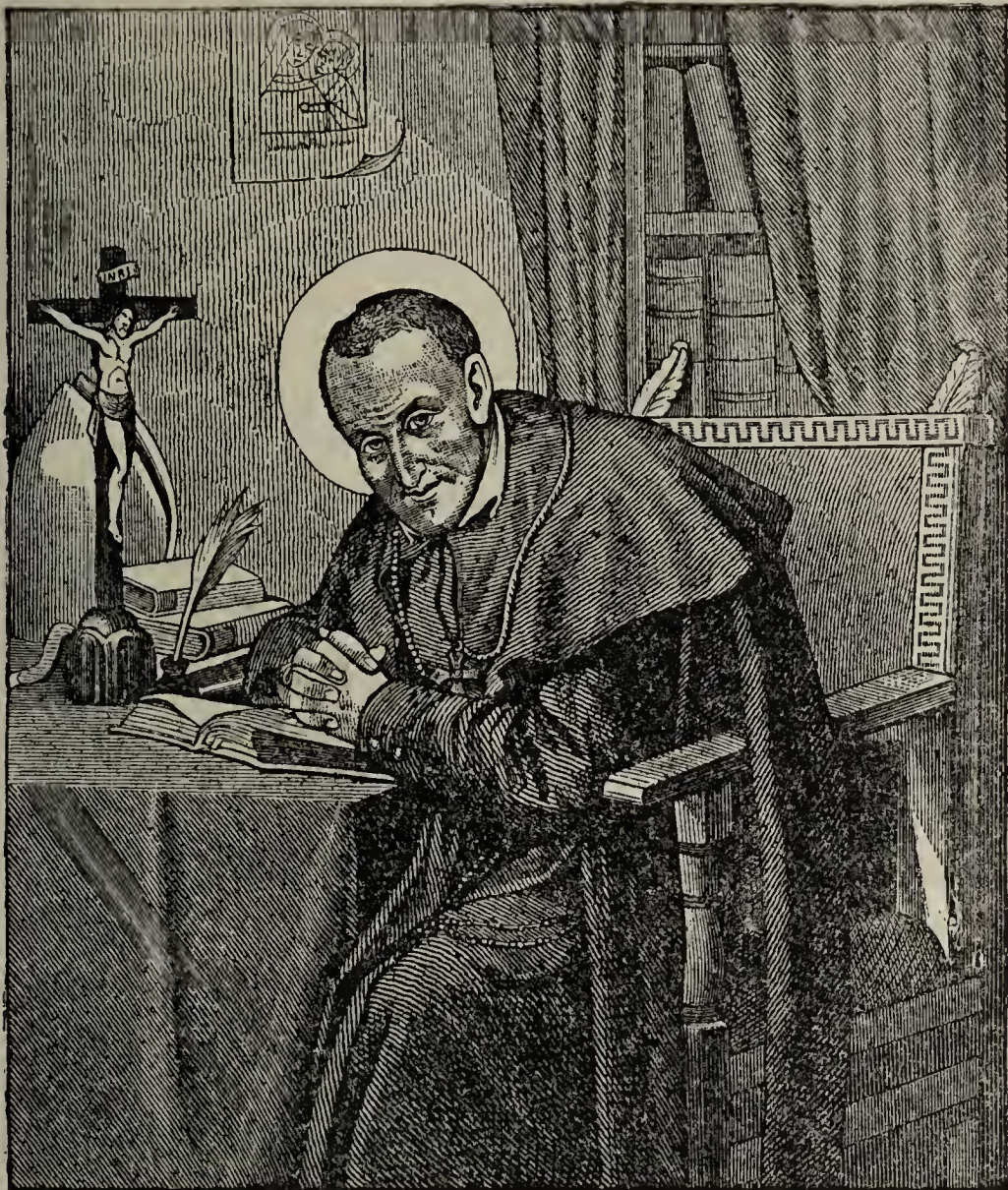


ALPHONSUS, a jewel to the Church during the seventeenth century, was born Sept. 27th, 1696, descending from the ancient and noble Neapolitan family, the Liguories. His pious parents, Joseph Liguori and Anne Catharine Cavalieri, placed him at a very early age under the care of a very virtuous priest, in order to secure for him a sound and pious education; under such guidance Alphonsus progressed rapidly both in piety and in knowledge. He succeeded so well in the higher branches of study that he merited and obtained the title of Doctor of laws before the twentieth year of his age.

Having received his education at the hands of the most celebrated lawyers, he entered upon his public career at the courts of Naples, a true lover of justice and defender of innocence. He soon enjoyed the reputation of an able and most trustworthy advocate, whence he became the refuge of many parties both at home and abroad.

Alphonsus had been retained as counsel for the defense in a case of great importance; his pleading was so eloquent that the judge was disposed to pass judgment in favor of his client. The counsel on the other side, however, begged Alphonsus to reconsider whether his argument was not unsound. Alphonsus to his great confusion and surprise perceived a flaw in his reasoning, owing to his having overlooked a negative clause in the process. The court complimented him on his able defence, attributing his oversight to the enthusiasm natural to a young lawyer. Alphonsus, however, did not so willingly acquit himself; bowing to the court, he was heard to say, as he withdrew: "False world, I know you, and have done with you," and henceforth gave up the bar, and retired from the world. In his





undisturbed solitude and amid tears and incessant prayers his design to leave the world and join the ecclesiastical state began to mature; his father also yielded to his intentions, though only after all attempts to dissuade him had been frustrated. Alphonsus at once joined the Congregation of Missions at Naples, and in order to prepare himself fitly for the duties of his call, he practiced a most rigorous observance of the rules prescribed, omitting no exercise of piety. Full of ardor to preach the gospel he, already as deacon, ascended the pulpit, around which there soon gathered numerous hearers, who were not able to resist his singular power of speech. Truly, his zeal was blessed by God with abundant fruit, which increased the more, when he as priest began to labor in the confessional, where by the force of his words he moved to penance even the most obdurate hearts.

Upon occasion of recruiting his health after a severe illness, the saint in company with several priests went to the town of Scala, where he had likewise labored with singular energy in the work of saving souls; here he was ad-



vised by a pious nun that it was the will of God he should found a Congregation of priests for the purpose of instructing youth and particularly for converting the peasantry to a pious life. Though the saint felt himself unfitted for such an important undertaking, he confided the matter to his superiors, having well considered it, and after having had recourse to most assiduous prayer. His superiors, however, viewing it as the design of God, urged him to execute this holy work. Accordingly the saint, despite the many hinderances and even persecutions, which he was obliged to suffer, founded a Congregation of pious priests (1723), calling it the "Congregation of the most holy Redeemer;" he chose the bishop of Castellmare to be their head.

Although these men, so zealous for the salvation of souls, had no other than poor, small houses as their homes, and only the necessary bodily food, their number increased to such a degree that the saint was obliged to found a second and a third mission.

He now thought of compiling specific rules for his Congregation, which with the aid of God, and the counsel of pious and prudent men he completed. It would be difficult to estimate the good this Congregation has accomplished by missions, preaching, catechising and other public instructions. It soon became known what Alphonsus and his Congregation effected towards promoting God's honor among men and the salvation of souls. Hence many provinces endeavored to secure for themselves the benefit of this blessed institution, which Pope Benedict XIV. also confirmed.

Ever intent upon preserving and perfecting the spirit of piety in his Congregation, Alphonsus, in his truly paternal love, was equally accessible to all of his subordinates, whilst he hesitated not to punish failings with due severity.

Nor was his zeal limited to a small province; of the extensive kingdom of both Sicilies there was scarcely a town that had not enjoyed the benefit of his apostolic labors; before even finishing one mission he was invited to another. In order to reward the saint, Charles III., King of Sicily, offered him the archbishopric of Salerno, which, however, the saint most humbly declined; but soon after this, Pope Clement XIII. nominated him bishop of St. Agatha, which dignity he was at length obliged to accept in obedience to the will of the Pope, although he strove by all means to evade the honor. He observed the rules of his institution with the same zeal when bishop as when he resided with the Congregation. The main object he had in view was to increase piety and science among the clergy of his dio-



cese, and he introduced, as far as possible, among them the rules of his Congregation; thus the Seminary of St. Agatha soon became a school of the fear of God and of Christian erudition.

The saint also introduced nuns, such as were already established at Scala, called "Of Our Redeemer;" he encouraged them in the love of Jesus and in the veneration of the B. V. Mary; he inculcated especially the worthy use and frequentation of the holy Sacraments, and advised them in particular to avoid all superfluous conversation with worldly-minded people. He was indefatigable in leading profligate women back to a virtuous life; he did all in his power to preserve young women in their innocence, when they were in any danger of losing it; he was a solicitous father and a general aid to poor, disconsolate and afflicted souls.

After the saint had for thirteen years filled his office with the utmost fidelity, even though oppressed with bodily infirmity, and after having enriched the Church with many most valuable writings, he repeatedly begged of the Holy See to be released from his office, especially as his infirmities increased from day to day.

At length the Pope, Pius VI. reluctantly conceded in the year 1775. The saint recommended the care of his Congregation to his Vicar-general, the Rev. P. Andreas Villaut, and at once prepared himself for his approaching end. With glowing ardor he received the holy Sacraments, and, according to the wish of his confessor, he blessed each member of his Congregation. During his last moments he pressed a crucifix and a picture of our Lady of Dolors to his breast, and in presence of his disconsolate brethren he breathed his soul into the hands of its Creator on the 1st of August, 1787, being in the ninetieth year of his age. — The Lord glorified him by miracles during his life and after death.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who didst inflame blessed Alphonsus Mary Thy confessor and bishop with a burning zeal for the salvation of souls, and through him didst bless Thy Church with a new family: grant, we beseech Thee, that, being instructed by his wholesome precepts, and strengthened by his example, we may be able happily to attain to Thee. Thro'. &c.

*The Epistle and Gospel as on the Feast of St. Ignatius Loyola.*

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. DOMINIC.

[August 4.]



T. DOMINIC was born in 1170, at Calaruega in Spain. His mother shortly before his birth dreamed that she became the mother of a whelp which carried in its mouth a burning torch, with which it set the whole world on fire. After his birth it was her first care to procure him speedily the grace of baptism. By her early instructions he was taught to turn the first dawning of his reason towards his Creator. Such was his fervor in his childhood that he accustomed himself to rise often in the night to pray. At fourteen years of age the saint was sent to the public schools of Palentia. Dominic here laid in a solid stock of learning, and became a great proficient in rhetoric, philosophy and theology. He grew not only in wisdom, but also in holiness. He kept his senses in constant subjection by austere mortification; even with the virtuous he made his conversation very short; boards or the floor were the only bed on which he took his rest. From his mother's example he had learned a tender devotion to the holy Mother of God, and an extraordinary affection for the poor, whom to assist in a famine he not only gave all his money and goods, but sold even his books and his own writings. As soon as he had finished his studies, he preached the word of God to the people of Palentia with wonderful success. Every one looked upon the man of God as an oracle, consulted him in all doubts and acquiesced in his decisions. In 1198 he left Palentia at the invitation of Azebodo, Bishop of Osma, and received the habit of the regular canons of St. Austin, being then twenty-eight years old. He now subjected his body to still greater austerities. Although he studied to conceal from the eyes of men as much as possible this holy severity, its effects appeared sensibly in the decay of his strength. His bishop, therefore, ordered him to mix a little wine with the water which he drank. The bishop of Osma, being sent on an embassy into France, took Dominic with him. On their way they passed through Languedoc, which was then filled with the abominations of the heresy of the Albigenses. Being pierced to the heart by compassion for the unhappy condition of these heretics, the bishop and





Dominic went to Rome to ask of Pope Innocent III. permission to stay in Languedoc to labor among the Albigenses. The Pope readily granted this permission. They immediately returned into Languedoc. Dominic and the bishop, who were joined by some Cistercian abbots, proposed that to labor with success they ought to employ persuasion rather than terror; and that they should imitate the poverty of Christ and the apostles, traveling on foot, without money



or provisions. St. Dominic labored unceasingly in these missions. He never complained of any affronts or wrongs which he received, courageously encountered every danger wherever the good of souls called him. So ardent was his zeal for the salvation of souls, that he was consumed with a burning desire to sacrifice for them his liberty, health and life. To his incredible labors he added the austerities of penance. He often allowed himself, especially during all Lent, no other nourishment than bread and water, and spending with his companions a great part of the night in prayer, he reserved only a short time for rest, which he took lying on a board. St. Dominic saw with grief that many children of Catholic parents, for want of the means of procuring a proper education, fell into the hands of those who corrupted their morals or their faith. To cut off the source of this fatal disorder, he founded the famous nunnery of Prouille. This monastery was the mother-house of all the nuns of the Order of St. Dominic. After two years the bishop of Osma had to leave the mission, and return to his diocese. At his departure, he appointed St. Dominic as his successor in the office of Superior of the Mission. The saint, vested with this authority, established wholesome regulations to be observed by the zealous preachers, who labored under him. About this time he instituted the celebrated devotion of the Rosary, consisting of the recital of fifteen Our Fathers and a hundred and fifty Hail Marys, in honor of the fifteen principal mysteries of the life and sufferings of our Blessed Saviour, and of his holy Mother. This prayer is equally adapted to persons of the weakest understanding, and to those that are the most learned, or the most advanced in exercises of sublime contemplation. All find in it a most inexhaustible fund of the highest acts of faith, hope, divine love, praise and thanksgiving, with a supplication for succor in all spiritual and corporal necessities.

St. Dominic had spent ten years in preaching in Languedoc, when in 1215 he founded his religious Order of Preaching Friars, the plan of which he had meditated some time before. He established an Order of religious men, who with the strictest retirement and assiduous exercises of contemplation, should join a close application to sacred studies, and all the functions of an apostolic life, especially that of preaching.

He prescribed austere fasts, perpetual abstinence from flesh, and the most severe poverty, ordaining that his friars should receive their meager subsistence from the alms of the faithful. The principal aim of the saint by this insti-



tution was to multiply in the Church zealous preachers, whose spirit and example might be a means more easily to spread the light of faith and the fire of divine charity. Sixteen of his fellow missionaries acquiesced readily to his project; and Peter Cellani, one of this number, gave some houses of his possession in Toulouse, in which they formed themselves into a regular community, under the protection of the bishop. This was the first convent of the Order. To establish it, the founder was obliged to go to Rome. Pope Innocent III. received the saint with great demonstrations of kindness on account of the reputation of his sanctity. Nevertheless the Pope at first made some objections to this Order, upon complaints lately received that too great a multiplication of Orders would bring confusion, and that it was better to reform those that were already established. In the night following, the Pope dreamed that he saw the Lateran church in danger of falling, and that St. Dominic stepped in and supported it with his shoulders. Hereupon the Pope approved the new Order by word of mouth, bidding the founder draw up the constitutions and lay them before him. St. Dominic returned to Toulouse, and after a mature consultation with his sixteen colleagues made choice of the rule of the canons of St. Austin. He added certain particular amendments.

Before St. Dominic returned to Rome Pope Innocent III. had died, and Honorius III. had been chosen in his place. The new Pope confirmed St. Dominic's order by two bulls, both dated on the 26th of December, 1215. He also detained the saint several months in Rome to preach in that city; this commission the saint executed with incredible applause and success. At length he returned with the consent of his Holiness to Toulouse, and spent some time in forming his religious brethren in the practice of the most perfect maxims of an interior life. He exhorted them strenuously to attend in the first place to the sanctification of their own souls. He added excellent instructions on humility, a perfect distrust in themselves, and an entire confidence in God alone. After the Feast of the Assumption of our Lady, in the year 1217, he sent some of his religious to Spain and Portugal, and some to Paris. The extraordinary reputation of St. Dominic, and his preaching friars, drew many learned doctors and other eminent men into this new Order, and the saint established convents at Lyons, Montpellier, &c. St. Dominic went again to Rome in 1217, and the Pope, desirous that his Order should have a house in that city, gave him the Church of St. Sixtus. During this stay at Rome God honored his ministry with



so many illustrious miracles that Dominic acquired the name of Thaumaturgus. Among others, he recalled to life two persons. In 1218 the saint undertook a journey from Rome through Languedoc into Spain, and founded a famous convent at Segovia and another at Madrid. In the next year he journeyed to Toulouse and Paris. He did not stay many weeks in this capital, but gained souls to God by his sermons and instructions, and received into his Order many persons of distinction. In 1220 the saint waited on Pope Honorius III. at Viterbo. Until then Dominic had taken no other title but that of Superior; the Pope now commanded he should be styled General.

Wherever the saint traveled, he frequently preached; and always with that incredible success which can only be the fruit of continual prayer. Though he was Superior, he was distinguished in nothing from the lowest among his brethren but by his more profound humility and more rigorous abstinence. To nourish in his heart a perfect contempt of the world, he was a sincere lover of holy poverty. He took all possible precautions to prevent riches ever becoming the portion and the bane of his Order. He never began to instruct any one, without first imploring on his knees the intercession of the Mother of God. In conversing with others it was his delight to speak only of God and heavenly things. St. Dominic never ceased to pray for the conversion of infidels and sinners. He would have all his religious apply to this great work, every one according to his capacity. For this great function he prepared his religious by long practice of virtue, especially of prayer, humility, self-denial and obedience. He taught his missionaries the art of preaching to the heart by animating them with an ardent zeal and charity. Being once asked after preaching, in what book he had studied his sermon, "In no other," said he, "than in that of charity."

St. Dominic made frequent missionary excursions, founded many convents in Italy, and sent some of his religious into Morocco, Portugal, Sweden, Norway, Ireland and England.

Long before his death St. Dominic had a presentiment of it. Setting out on a journey from Bologna to Milan, he said to his friends there: "You now see me in health; but before the glorious Assumption of the Virgin Mother, I shall have departed hence to the Lord." He returned to Bologna in the summer, and was seized with a burning fever. Having throughout his sickness undergone severe pains with the greatest cheerfulness, he received the last Sacraments and continued in secret prayer till he calmly



INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. LAWRENCE, MARTYR. 829

expired on the 6th of August, 1221. St. Dominic was canonized by Gregory IX. in 1234.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who vouchsafed to enlighten Thy Church by the merits and teaching of blessed Dominic Thy confessor: grant that, through his intercession, it may not be left destitute of temporal succors, and may continually advance in spiritual growth. Thro'. &c.

*The Epistle is the same as on the Feast of St. Ignatius Loyola, and the Gospel as on the Feast of St Anthony.*

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INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF  
ST. LAWRENCE, MARTYR.

[August 10.]

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ST. LAWRENCE, a youth endowed with rare gifts of body and soul, out of love for God and for the salvation of his soul, put the world with all its honor, riches and pleasures beneath his feet, and dedicated himself to the priesthood, at a time when the Christians and especially the clergy, were continually persecuted. On account of his singular merit and knowledge, his fidelity and prudence, he was, notwithstanding his youth, appointed archdeacon by Pope Sixtus, in which office, besides his service at the altar, he had charge of the church treasury and the money for the poor, which led to his martyrdom. By command of the Emperor Valerian, who ordered the bishops and priests to be sought after to be executed, the holy Pope Sixtus was taken prisoner, sentenced to death, and executed. Lawrence burning with desire for a martyr's death, wished to die with his spiritual father, and for this purpose followed him to the place of death, saying: "Where are you going, my father, without your son?" But the Pope ordered him to return and guard the treasures of the church. When these words were reported to the officers, Lawrence was taken and the treasures demanded of him. He asked for three days in which to consider the demand, and at the end of that time called the poor and sick to him, led them before the tyrant, and said: "These are the treasures of the church which I promised you." The tyrant became furious and



ordered the saint to be bound and burnt upon an iron grate. Lawrence bore this horrible death joyfully and with indifference to the fire; after a time he said to the tyrant: "I am now roasted enough on this side, let them turn me over." The tyrant had him turned to the other side, upon which the saint remarked: "My flesh is now well roasted, eat it, if it please thee." With his eyes raised to heaven, having prayed for the conversion of Rome and for the spreading of the gospel throughout the whole world, the saint slept quietly in the Lord, on the 10th of August, 258.

The Introit reads: Praise and beauty are before him: holiness and majesty in his sanctuary. Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle: sing to the Lord, all the earth. (*Ps. xcv.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant us, we beseech Thee, almighty God, to extinguish the raging flames of sin: even as Thou gavest grace unto blessed Lawrence to overcome his fiery torments. Thro'. &c.

EPISTLE. (*ii. Cor. ix. 6—10.*) BRETHREN, he who soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly: and he who soweth in blessings shall also reap of blessings. Every one as he hath determined in his heart, not with sadness, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound in you, that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work, as it is written: He hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor: his justice remaineth for ever. And he that ministereth seed to the sower, will both give you bread to eat, and will multiply your seed, and increase the growth of the fruits of your justice.

EXPLANATION. These words apply suitably to St. Lawrence, who, instead of making himself rich by the church treasures, or gaining great honors by giving them up to the avaricious tyrant, distributed them to the poor and thus gained spiritual and eternal treasures in abundance. In this we should imitate him. Alms-giving is, as the apostle says, like a field, which the more it is sowed by giving, the richer harvest it will yield for body and soul. We should not be sad or vexed in giving, for this shows parsimony; he who gives freely to the poor, is agree-



able to God, and God will repay him in His own time with corporal and spiritual riches, and will never let him come to want. That which we give to the poor, is not lost, but is deposited in the Lord's treasury, whence we will again receive it with great interest.

GOSPEL. (*John* xii. 24—26.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: Amen, amen I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, keepeth it unto life eternal. If any man minister to me, let him follow me: and where I am, there also shall my minister be. If any man minister to me, him will my Father honor.

*What is meant by the grain of wheat which dies?*

Christ, our Lord, who had to die and lie in the grave, in order to bring forth the fruit of redemption and the conversion of men; every true Christian who by mortifying his evil desires, avoiding improper inclinations, and the vanity of the world, brings forth the fruit of virtue and good works. Such mortifications are a kind of martyrdom, and like martyrdom will be most gloriously rewarded by God. "Crucify thy flesh," says St. Chrysostom, "that thou mayest obtain the martyr's crown." "It is," says St. Bernard, "a species of torture, by which the spirit kills the works of the flesh." "Patiently to endure disgrace, injustice, and persecution, to love those who hate us, is an inward martyrdom," says St. Gregory. "The whole life of a Christian," writes St. Augustine, "if led by the gospel, is a continual cross and martyrdom."

*What does it mean to hate one's life?*

It means to battle against our evil inclinations, and to reject all that is against the commandments of God, and dangerous to our salvation. Such hatred is true love, for thereby the soul is preserved to eternal life; on the contrary, to yield everything to our soul's passions and inclinations, is to destroy it forever. We hate the sick man, if we give him that which he desires, when it is injurious to him, and we love him, if we refuse it to him. In the same way he truly loves his soul, who resists its evil desires; and he hates it, who yields to them. To such a true

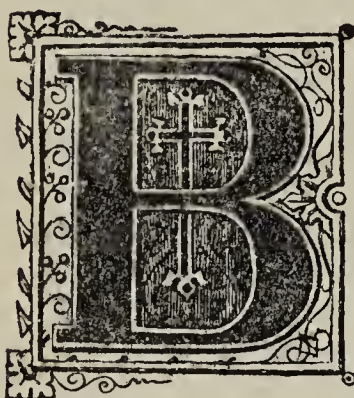


love for our souls, we are admonished by the Holy Ghost: Go not after thy lusts, but turn away from thy own will. If thou give to thy soul her desires, she will make thee a joy to thy enemies. (*Ecclus. xviii. 30, 31.*)

PETITION. O Jesus, blessed Fruit of the Virgin Mary, we thank Thee, that Thou wast pleased, through Thy incarnation, to suffer such a bitter death for our salvation. Ah! that we rightly knew this grace, and imitated Thee in our lives, as have so many thousands of martyrs, among whom shines especially Thy servant Lawrence. Grant us, that we may also be filled with the desire to bear all sufferings patiently unto the end, and so zealously serve Thee here, that we may in the other world, as Thou hast promised, be honored by Thy Heavenly Father, and be happy for all eternity. Amen.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

(August 15.)



*Why is this feast so called?*

BECAUSE on this day the Blessed Virgin was taken up into heaven.

*Why are plants and fruits blessed on this day?*

The Church does this to manifest her joy at the glorious victory which Mary achieved over death, the world and the devil, and at her splendid triumph when she, adorned with virtues as with so many flowers, entered heaven; and that God may so sanctify and bless the plants and fruits, that their use may serve to our welfare.

At the Introit of the Mass, the Church invites us to universal joy by singing: Let us all rejoice in the Lord, celebrating a festal day in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, for whose Assumption the angels rejoice, and give praise to the Son of God. My heart





hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the King. (*Ps. xliv.*) Glory &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** Pardon, Lord, we beseech Thee, the transgressions of Thy servants: that we, who by our own deeds are unable to please Thee, may be saved by the intercession of the Mother of Thy Son our Lord. Through the same &c.

**LESSON.** (*Ecclus. xxiv. 11—20.*) In all things I sought rest, and I shall abide in the inheritance of the Lord. Then the creator of all things commanded,



and said to me; and he that made me rested in my tabernacle, and said to me: Let thy dwelling be in Jacob, and thy inheritance in Israel, and take root in my elect. And so was I established in Sion, and in the holy city likewise I rested, and my power was in Jerusalem. And I took root in an honorable people, and in the portion of my God his inheritance, and my abode is in the full assembly of saints. I was exalted like a cedar in Libanus, and as a cypress-tree on Mount Sion. I was exalted like a palm-tree in Cades, and as a rose-plant in Jericho. As a fair olive-tree in the plains, and as a plane-tree by the water in the streets was I exalted. I gave a sweet smell like cinnamon and aromatic balm: I yielded a sweet odor like the best myrrh.

EXPLANATION. The Holy Ghost uses these words in praise of eternal wisdom, but the Church applies them to Mary also, to describe the glory and splendor of her assumption. Mary found her rest only in God, the Creator of all things, who created her, and preserved her from original sin, and lived in her womb as in a tabernacle. On this day God seems to say to her: "Possess the abode destined for thee from all eternity, and the inheritance designed for thee as the first of the elect." Thus Mary is exalted as Queen of the saints and angels in the heavenly Sion; and now in this holy city, she enjoys an undisturbed peace with God, shares His happiness with Him, and is second only to Him in power and glory; there she shines in the most radiant garments, like the ever-blooming rose of Jericho, from there she lets flow upon the wretched children of Adam the oil of her mercy as from a fair olive-tree, shades them with her protection like a plane-tree, and refreshes them with the sweet fragrance of her virtue and grace.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* x. 38—42.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus entered into a certain town: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house: and she had a sister called Mary, who sitting also at the Lord's feet heard his word. But Martha was busy about much serving: who stood and said: Lord, hast thou no



care that my sister hath left me alone to serve? Speak to her, therefore, that she help me. And the Lord answering, said to her: Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and art troubled about many things. But, one thing is necessary. Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her.

*Why does the Church cause this gospel to be read to-day?*

Because it can be well applied to Mary, who more worthily and tenderly even than Martha, received, nourished and served the Son of God, and more fervently and attentively than even Martha's sister, listened to His words, preserved them in her heart and sought to fulfil them. In both ways has she chosen the best of all parts, because in both she walked in perfection, and so gained the greatest of rewards which can never be taken from her.

*What may we learn from these two sisters?*

That like Martha, who is a type of active, stirring life, we should be energetic in performing the duties of our vocation, but not on that account forget to practice good works, to do all for the love of God, seeking in all things His pleasure, and, since we can no longer administer to Christ in a material way, we should serve the poor, of whom He says that whatever we do to the least of them, He will consider and reward as if done to Himself. We are also like Mary who represents the contemplative life, to be fervent in prayer, in listening and meditating upon the word of God, upon the divine Majesty, its perfections and our frailty, thus to sanctify ourselves and to become more worthy of eternal happiness. This contemplative life Christ calls the better part, but does not, therefore, set aside the active life. We can easily unite both, but must never lose sight of the better part.

*Why does Jesus reproach Martha?*

Because she was uneasy and distracted by her over-carefulness and anxiety, and forgot to hear the divine word. — Thus do many Christians who find no time to work for the salvation of their soul, and even during divine service and the sermon are thinking of their domestic affairs, and so leave the church without having gained anything for their soul.



*What is the one thing necessary?*

To seek the glory of God and the salvation of our soul. He who attends to this, attends to all his duties, he is busy and active, but not uneasy and disturbed, and calmly directs his mind to God in all his labors, offers his every step to Him, and draws His grace upon himself.

PETITION. Would that I had better attended to the one thing necessary! Unhappy hours which I have squandered for the world, its vanities and pleasures! Where are you now? What shall I have from you in eternity but sorrow and desolation? Could I but call back my wasted life? But since that cannot be, give me Thy grace, I beseech Thee, O most beneficent God, to pass the remaining years of my life wholly in Thy service, and work above all and only for the affairs of my soul.

## THOUGHTS OF ST. BERNARD ON THE ASSUMPTION OF MARY.

**O**N this day the glorified Virgin entered heaven and crowned by her presence the holy pleasures of its inhabitants. But what mind can conceive the glory with which the arrival of the Queen of the world was celebrated by the brilliant heavenly hosts, their advance to greet her, their chanting as they led her to the magnificent throne? Who can fancy the tender gaze, the loving countenance, the divine caresses with which she was received by her Son and placed over all created beings, honored as became such a mother, with the glory that became such a Son? What lips can describe the assumption of Mary? As upon earth she, before all others, received special grace, so in heaven she, before all others, receives special glory. If eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to know the delights that God has prepared for those that love Him, who shall say what is prepared for her who bore Him and loved Him more than all! O blessed art thou, Mary! Most blessed wert thou, when thou didst receive the Saviour; most blessed art thou, when the Saviour receives thee!

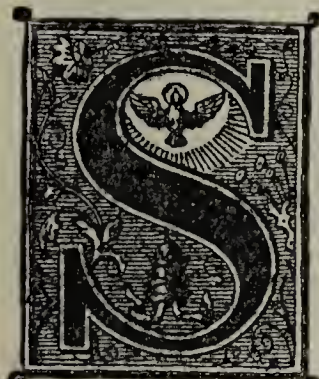


## ST. BERNARD'S PRAYER TO MARY.

We accompany thee, on this day, with our most ardent wishes to thy Son, O glorious Virgin, Queen of heaven! and follow thee from afar, O happy Virgin! Give thy mildness to the world, give of the grace thou hast found with God. Obtain by thy blessed intercession, grace for the guilty, recovery for the sick, strength for the faint-hearted, aid for those in peril! Dispense to us thy servants, who on this glorious festival-day invoke thy sweetest name, O gentlest Queen, the grace of Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord and God, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF  
ST. BERNARD, ABBOT.

[August 20.]



**S**T. BERNARD, the third son of Tescelin and Alice, both of the highest nobility in Burgundy, was born in 1091, at Fontaines, a castle near Dijon. His parents were persons of great piety, and his mother not content to offer him to God as soon as he was born, afterwards consecrated him to His service in the Church. Bernard was sent, when still young, to Chatillon on the Seine, to pursue a complete course of studies. Even then he loved to be alone; he was always recollected, obedient, obliging to all, and modest beyond expression. He made it his continual and earnest prayer to God that He would never suffer him to sully his innocence by sin. The quickness of his intellect astonished his masters. Bernard at a very early age entered upon the studies of theology and of the holy Scriptures. He was nineteen years old when his pious mother died. At this time Bernard became his own master; for his father was employed at a distance in the army. He made his appearance in the world with all the advantages and talents which can make it agreeable to a young nobleman, or which could make him loved by it. His vivacity of wit and cultivated genius, his prudence and natural modesty, his affability and sweetness of temper, made him loved by all. But these very advan-



**ST. BERNARD.**

tages had their snares. His first danger was from false friends; but the light of grace made him discover the first attempts and resolutely repulse them. Once he happened to fix his eyes on the face of a woman, but immediately reflecting that this was a temptation, he ran to a pond and leaped up to his neck in the water, which was then as cold as ice. He was terrified at the dangers of the world, and began to think of forsaking it, and retiring to Citeaux,



where God was served with great fervor. His brothers and friends endeavored to dissuade him from it; but he so pleaded his cause, as to draw them all over to join him in his courageous undertaking. In the year 1113 Bernard arrived at Citeaux, accompanied by thirty noblemen. This holy company prostrating themselves before St. Stephen, the founder of Citeaux, begged to be admitted to join the monks in their penitential lives. St. Stephen seeing their fervor, received them with open arms, and gave them the habit. St. Bernard was then twenty-three years old. He entered this monastery with the desire to be forgotten by men, to live hidden, that he might be occupied only with God. To renew his fervor against sloth, he repeated often to himself: "Bernard, Bernard, why camest thou hither?" He studied to mortify his senses and to die to himself in all things. After a year's novitiate, he did not know whether the top of his cell was covered with a ceiling, or whether the church had more than one window. In 1114 he made with his companions his profession at the hands of St. Stephen. He set out with extraordinary ardor in all his monastic exercises. At his work his soul was constantly occupied with God, and he used afterwards to say that he never had any other master in his studies of the holy Scriptures than the oak and beech of the forest. He labored always under some bodily infirmity, but he suffered without ever speaking of it. He was a great lover of poverty in his habit, cell, and all other things, but called uncleanness a mark of sloth or affectation. His chief sustenance was coarse bread softened in warm water.

The number of monks having grown too great at Citeaux, St. Stephen founded other monasteries, and in 1115 selected St. Bernard as abbot of a new house in the diocese of Langres in Champagne. They walked in procession singing psalms, with their new abbot at their head, and settled in a desert called the Valley of Wormwood, encompassed by a wild forest. This young colony often had much to suffer, and being several times in extreme necessity, was as often relieved in some sudden, unexpected manner. The reputation of this house in a short time became so great, that the number of monks in it amounted to one hundred and thirty, and the country gave this valley the name of Clara-vallis or Clairvaux.

St. Bernard now seemed to set no bounds to the austerities which he practiced. This severity brought upon him a severe illness, and his life was almost despaired of towards the close of the year 1116. He was, therefore, obliged by the general chapter of the Order to submit to the



authority of William of Champeaux, who commanded that he should lodge outside of the enclosure, that he should not observe the rule of the monastery as to eating and drinking, and that he should be entirely discharged from all care of the affairs of his community. After a year St. Bernard returned in good health to his monastery, and to the practice of his former austerities. He founded many monasteries, and by his sanctity and learning in the wisdom of the Holy Ghost drew great numbers of the most eminent men into his Order. So great was the reputation of his learning and piety that princes desired to have their differences settled by him; bishops regarded his decisions as oracles, and referred to him the most important affairs of their Churches: the Popes looked upon his advice as the greatest support of the Holy See.

After the death of Honorius II. in 1130, Innocent II. was chosen Pope by the greater number of cardinals. But at the same time a faction attempted to invest with that supreme dignity cardinal Peter, who took the name of Anacletus, and was so powerful that he seized all the strongholds of Rome. Upon this occasion it was St. Bernard whom God used as an instrument to restore peace to His Church. In a council of French bishops he strenuously maintained the justice of Innocent's cause; he persuaded Henry I., King of England to acknowledge Innocent, and convinced the Emperor Lothaire of the validity of the election; in a public conference at Salerno in Southern Italy, Bernard convicted Anacletus' partisans of schism, and brought over many persons of distinction to the union of the Church.

The saint exerted the same zeal in maintaining the purity of the Catholic faith which he employed in the support of its unity. He caused the writings of Peter Abelard and of Gilbert de la Porree to be condemned, and by his learning and mildness succeeded in making both retract their errors.

In 1145 Bernard of Pisa, Abbot of the Cistercian monastery of the Three Fountains in the neighborhood of Rome, was chosen Pope and took the name of Eugene III. He had been a monk at Clairvaux under St. Bernard. St. Bernard was struck with surprise at the news, and fearing lest so great an exaltation should make him forget himself, he wrote to him five books of consideration, pressing upon him without flattery, the various duties of his station, and strongly recommending to him always to reserve time for self-examination and daily meditation.

About this time the newly founded Christian kingdom of Jerusalem was in the greatest danger. Pope Eugene III.,



coming into France in 1147, held there several councils to promote a second crusade, and commissioned St. Bernard to preach the holy war. This the abbot executed with incredible success in all the chief provinces of France, and afterwards did the same in the principal cities of Germany. King Louis VII. of France, and the Emperor Conrad took part in this crusade, but it ended disastrously. The ill success must partly be attributed to the treachery of the Greeks; but the finger of God was visible in chastising the sins of the Christians; for a great part of those who composed the crusade were led by no other motive than the prospect of plunder, and committed every kind of disorder in their march. This unfortunate expedition raised a great storm against St. Bernard, because he had seemed to promise success. His answer was that he confided in the divine mercy for a blessing on an enterprise undertaken for the honor of the Divine Name; but that the sins of the army were the cause of their misfortunes.

In the beginning of the year 1153, St. Bernard fell into a decline. He had long dwelt in heaven in desire, sighing continually under the weight of his banishment from God; though his desire he humbly ascribed to pusillanimity, not to love. After six months of suffering, with inflamed sighs of compunction and holy love, he prepared himself for his last moment, in which he happily yielded up his soul to God on the 20th of August, 1153. His name was solemnly enrolled among the saints by Alexander III. in 1165.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who didst give unto Thy people blessed Bernard to be a minister of eternal salvation: grant, we beseech Thee, that we may be found worthy to have the same for an intercessor in heaven, whom we have had for a teacher of life upon earth. Thro'. &c.

EPISTLE. (*Ecclus.* xxxix. 6—14.) The just will give his heart to resort early to the Lord that made him, and he will pray in the sight of the Most High. He will open his mouth in prayer, and will make supplication for his sins. For if it shall please the great Lord, he will fill him with the spirit of understanding: and he will pour forth the words of his wisdom as showers, and in his prayer he will confess to the Lord:



and he shall direct his counsel, and his knowledge, and in his secrets shall he meditate. He shall show forth the discipline he hath learned, and shall glory in the law of the covenant of the Lord. Many shall praise his wisdom, and it shall never be forgotten. The memory of him shall not depart away, and his name shall be in request from generation to generation. Nations shall declare his wisdom, and the Church shall show forth his praise.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* v. 13—19.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt lose its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is good for nothing any more, but to be cast out, and to be trodden on by men. You are the light of the world. A city seated on a mountain cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, that it may shine to all that are in the house. So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, who is in heaven. Do not think that I am come to destroy the law of the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For, amen I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall not pass of the law till all be fulfilled. He, therefore, that shall break one of these least commandments, and shall so teach men, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but he that shall do and teach, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW, APOSTLE.

[August 24.]



BARTHOLOMEW, a native of Cana in Galilee, is probably that Nathanael, whom Philip took with him when our Lord called him. Chosen by Christ to be an apostle, Bartholomew left all at once, followed Him, and witnessed His sufferings and death, His resurrection and ascension. Filled with the Holy Ghost, he preached the gospel first to the Jews; gaining but little fruit from their stubbornness he turned to the heathens in India, where he carried a copy of the gospel of St. Matthew; from India St. Bartholomew went to Phrygia and Lycaonia, everywhere preaching the faith of the cross, coming finally to Great Armenia, where after gaining a rich harvest for the faith, he received the crown of martyrdom. In Great Armenia he smote with dumbness the devil who had been prophesying in a temple of the idols, freed the king's daughter of an evil spirit and converted the king and many of his court to the Christian religion. Enraged at this, the priests of the idols took an oath to put him to death, and at their instigation the saint was killed, after frightful tortures, by Astyages, a brother of the converted king and a zealous idolater. The general belief is, that he was crucified with his head downwards, and while still alive the skin stripped from his body. His sacred relics were brought to Benevent, Italy, in the year 809, and to Rome in 983, where they are venerated in the church of St. Bartholomew.

*[The Introit as on the Feast of St. Andrew.]*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Almighty and everlasting God, who hast given us a holy and solemn joy in this day's feast of Thy blessed Apostle Bartholomew: grant, we beseech Thee, unto Thy Church to love what he believed, and to preach what he taught. Thro.' &c.

EPISTLE. (i. Cor. xii. 27—21.) BRETHREN, you are the body of Christ, and members of member. And God indeed hath set some in the Church: first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly doctors, after that mir-



racles, then the graces of healings, helps, governments, kinds of tongues, interpretations of speeches. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all doctors? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the grace of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But be ye zealous for the better gifts.

EXPLANATION. The apostle here gives a beautiful picture of the holy Church. He teaches that all faithful Catholics compose the body of Christ, the universal Church; every true Catholic is, indeed, a member of a single Church, (diocese, congregation,) and this a member of the universal Church. No one is the whole body, each one is only a member, some members higher than others, superiors of the Church, bishops, priests and preachers, but no one should raise himself above the others; for as in a body all the members are necessary, so all the members of the body of Christ, the Church, are necessary, though they stand on the lowest step. But those members of the Church who do not possess the gifts which the apostle describes, and whom God has not called to special office in His Church, should not seek places and positions which are not in their vocation, but as every member keeps the place on the body which is given it, so should every member of the body of Christ, the Church, keep the place which God has appointed to him, and work according to his ability for the welfare of the whole Church. Has God placed you in a farmer's place? then envy not the nobles and the officers; is another more skilful than you? be content with your own gifts; does he fill a higher position? murmur not; for as all the members of a body cannot be eyes, so in the moral body of the Church all cannot be in a high office or position, but all the members of Christ's body, all the faithful of the Church, can be zealous for the more special gifts, for greater sanctity and perfection, each in his own position and for a perfect love of God; for upon this path the king and the beggar may journey together to eternal life.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* vi. 12—19.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus went out into a mountain to pray, and he passed the whole night in the prayer of God. And when day was come, he called unto him his disciples: and he chose twelve of them (whom also he named Apostles): Simon whom he surnamed Peter, and Andrew his



brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who is called Zelotes, and Jude the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, who was the traitor. And coming down with them, he stood in a plain place, and the company of his disciples, and a very great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and the sea-coast both of Tyre and Sidon, who were come to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases. And they that were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all the multitude sought to touch him, for virtue went out of him, and healed all.

*Why did Jesus go out into a mountain to pray?*

Because, as St. Bonaventure says, as a mountain is high, so also must our prayer raise us to God, and from the low valleys of the temporal life, we must elevate ourselves in all our thoughts and desires to God, if our prayer is to be of avail.

*Why did Christ pray in the night?*

To teach us that night is a time particularly adapted to prayer, because all things are then quiet and we can better collect our thoughts; also that we may preserve ourselves by prayer from the snares and temptations which the devil spreads for us at night; and that we should pray at night for the graces which during the day we have found necessary for ourselves and our neighbor. St. Gregory says that on this account Christ was accustomed to pray during the night, and during the day to work, by teaching and by miracles, for the salvation of souls. For these reasons, prayers are said in monasteries in the night, as advised by David, and it is a commendable custom for families to say night prayers in common.

*Why did Christ pray during this particular night?*

Because He was to choose His twelve apostles in the morning, and He, therefore, prayed to His Heavenly Father to give them all the graces required for the great mission. In the same spirit the Church prays four times during the year, on the Ember-days, for those who are chosen for the priesthood, as Christ prayed, and as the apostles fasted and prayed before consecrating Paul and Barnabas. (*Acts* xiii, 3.)



Besides this, the Church has appointed the fast at Ember time, and requires the faithful to ask with prayer and fasting for pious priests, for on the priesthood depends the temporal and eternal welfare or grief of the faithful. Let us pray fervently and often that God may give us zealous and exemplary priests.

*Why did Christ call those twelve apostles, who before were only disciples?*

Because the apostolic dignity is the highest after Christ's, and He desired that they should first, as disciples, prepare themselves for it. He who wishes to teach, must first learn. No one should enter into an office for which he is not fitted.

*What beautiful example is given us in our Saviour's coming down from the mountain, and in the conduct of the people awaiting Him?*

The Saviour's descending shows us His goodness and kindness to the poor, the lowly and the sick. He especially teaches the great ones of the earth, how they should kindly descend to their subjects, the weak and poor, hear their complaints, and relieve them. The conduct of the people who had come to hear Christ and sought to touch Him, because virtue went out from Him, curing them, teaches us first to seek the salvation of our soul, the voice of Jesus, and then in our physical needs to seek help from Him.

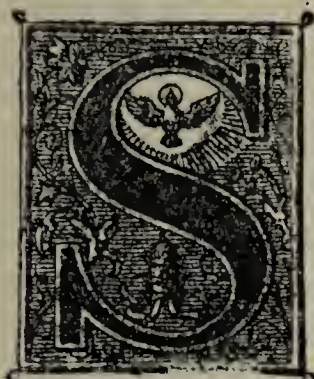
PETITION. O blessed Apostle Bartholomew! who left all to follow Christ, even giving thy life for Him, pray for us, that we also may give up all for Christ, that we may imitate Him, and be eternally happy. Amen.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. LOUIS, KING OF FRANCE.

[August 25.]



**S**T. LOUIS was the son of Louis VIII. and was born at Poissy, in the diocese of Chartres, on the 25th of April, 1215. His mother was Blanche, daughter of Alphonsus IX., king of Castile, the great conqueror, who in the battle of Muradal defeated Mahomet Emir, with an army of more than two hundred thousand Moors. Blanche was gifted with great beauty and prudence, was full of zeal for religion and virtue, and had great talents for government. This pious mother took great care to instil into the soul of her son Louis, the highest esteem and awe for everything that regarded the divine worship, the strongest sentiments of religion and virtue, and a particular love of holy chastity. She would often say to him when he was a child, "I love you, my dear son, with all the tenderness of which a mother is capable; but I would infinitely rather see you fall dead at my feet, than that you should ever commit a mortal sin." The impression made in his soul by these words was never effaced during his whole life. King Louis VIII., father of our saint, died on the 7th of November, 1226, when Louis was only twelve years old, and on the first Sunday of Advent the young prince was crowned king of France. Blanche, however, reigned until her son had reached the proper age. In the year 1234 he married Margaret, the oldest daughter of the count of Provence, who was as famous for her piety as for her beauty. Two years afterwards St. Louis took the reins of government into his own hands. His only aim now was to be a faithful servant of God, and a loving father to his people. He heard daily several Masses, and it was his heart's delight to listen to the word of God announced from the pulpit. Besides this he spent an hour in prayer and meditation each day. He often rose, even in the night, from his bed, to visit a chapel, which he had built in honor of the Blessed Virgin. In it were kept the crown, nails, spear and a large piece of the cross of our Lord. It was a glorious sight to see the king, surrounded by his people, assisting at the holy sacrifice of the Mass and receiving holy Communion. Every Friday he confessed his sins. Once when reproached because he spent so much time in prayer, he remarked: "Man is a strange being! they



make a crime of it, because I pray long, and I am sure they would not utter a word of reproach were I to spend that same time in playing or hunting!" He practiced the mortification of his senses in a high degree; fasting not only on days commanded, but also on Fridays and on the Vigils of the festivals of the Blessed Virgin. The splendid churches and monasteries which he built, in honor of the Holy Virgin Mother of God, bear testimony of the great love and devotion he had for her. He said daily the Office of the Blessed Virgin. The holy king was also remarkable for his charity. Undoubtedly he inherited this great virtue from his pious mother. Every Saturday he washed the feet of three old men, dried them and kissed them; after which he always gave them a sum of money. On returning to his dominions from his first crusade in the Holy Land, he served daily with his own hands two hundred poor, giving to each two loaves of bread and twelve Denier; besides this he gave, every day, general alms to all supplicants.

Having governed his people fifteen years, always proving himself a father and an example to all, he was brought to the brink of the grave by a dangerous fever. But his people solicited heaven by their vows, tears and alms-deeds for the life of their good king. God heard their prayers and restored him to health. Grateful to the Lord, the king vowed to take the cross and with an army to go to the East to wrest the holy sepulchre from the hands of the Saracens. The mother of our saint died while he was in the Holy Land, and this misfortune obliged him to return home to reassume the government of his kingdom.

He made strict laws against gamblers, blasphemers and particularly against prostitutes. He never forgot in the midst of his untiring endeavors for the benefit of his people, the cross he had taken. He wore it constantly upon his breast, and when the condition of the Christians in the Holy Land became more oppressive our saint could no longer resist his desire to take the Holy Land from the hands of the persecutors. He, therefore, collected another army and, although weakened by age and sickness, placed himself at the head of it. Before he embarked he made a spiritual retreat in the abbey of Mabisson. On the 1st of July, 1270, he with his army sailed from Aignes-Mortes, and when the fleet had reached Cagliari in Sardinia, a council was held and the resolution taken to attack Tunis. The French waited for the king of Sicily with his fleet, who delayed, and this delay was the cause of the greatest misfortunes. On account of the fearful heat, malignant fevers and other epidemics broke out among the soldiers



of St. Louis. The king's son died, and on the very day of his death, in the beginning of August, the king himself was seized with the same disorder. Being well aware of his critical condition, he called his son and successor, Philip, to his death-bed, and gave him pious instructions. He then asked for the last Sacraments, which he received with great devotion. Soon afterwards, quoting the words of the Psalmist: "Lord, I will enter into Thine house; I will adore in Thy holy temple, and will give glory to Thy name," he gave his holy soul into the hands of his God on the 25th of August, 1270.

Introit of the Mass: The mouth of the just shall meditate wisdom, and his tongue shall speak judgment: the law of his God is in his heart. Be not emulous of evil doers: nor envy them that work iniquity. (*Ps. xxxvi.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God who hast taken St. Louis Thy confessor from the earthly into the Glory of the heavenly kingdom: grant that through his merits and his intercession we may also be joined to the King of kings Jesus Christ Thy Son. Who with Thee liveth and reigneth &c.

LESSON. (*Wisdom. x. 10—14.*) The Lord conducted the just through the right ways, and showed him the kingdom of God, and gave him the knowledge of the holy things: made him honorable in his labors, and accomplished his labors. In the deceit of them that over-reached him, he stood by him, and made him honorable. He kept him safe from his enemies, and he defended him from seducers, and gave him a strong conflict, that he might overcome, and know that wisdom is mightier than all. She forsook not the just when he was sold, but delivered him from sinners: she went down with him into the pit, and in bands she left him not, till she brought him the sceptre of the kingdom, and power against those that oppressed him: and showed them to be liars that had accused him; and the Lord our God gave him everlasting glory.



EXPLANATION. God pointed out to Jacob His kingdom, the heavenly kingdom, by showing him that mystic ladder upon which God was leaning. (*Gen. xxviii. 12.*) By it God indicated how he governs the universe; and so was Jacob to govern his descendants, particularly through Christ who was to descend from him. Besides this He gave him the knowledge of holy things, namely: to understand what was conducive to his spiritual welfare, as also to divine worship, the militant and triumphant Church. This knowledge makes saints, and unites faith and holy prudence to divine hope and charity.

GOSPEL. (*Luke xix. 12—26.*) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke this parable to his disciples: A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And calling his ten servants, he gave them ten pounds, and said to them: Trade till I come. But his citizens hated him, and they sent an embassy after him, saying: We will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass that he returned, having received the kingdom: and he commanded his servants to be called, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. And the first came, saying: Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said to him: Well done, thou good servant, because thou hast been faithful in a little, thou shalt have power over ten cities. And the second came, saying: Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said to him: Be thou also over five cities. And another came, saying: Lord, behold here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up what thou didst not lay down, and thou reapest that which thou didst not sow. He saith to him: Out of thy own mouth I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up what I laid not down, and reaping that which I did not sow: and why then didst thou



not give my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have exacted it with usury? And he said to them that stood by: Take the pound away from him, and give it to him that hath the ten pounds. And they said to him: Lord, he hath ten pounds. But I say to you, that to every one that hath shall be given, and he shall abound: and from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken from him.

EXPLANATION. This parable agrees in substance with that in Matt. xxv., which treats of the talents. The Jews hated Christ, but God destroyed them as He will punish the impious on the Last Day. The ten and five cities signify the participation in the reign, the glory and the joy of Christ in a greater or less degree according to our merits.

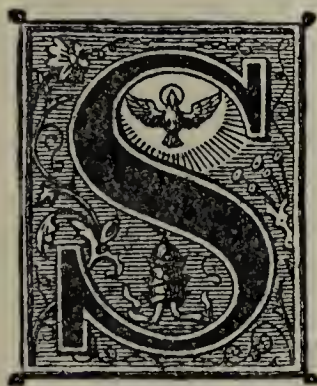
From the punishment inflicted on the one who kept the pound laid up in a napkin we may infer that such will be severely punished who have either not used or abused their talents, or gifts of God.

*What is understood by the accumulation of ten pounds by the one person, and of five by the other.*

That the grace of God may produce different fruits according to the different degrees of the will's coöperation.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. AUGUSTINE, BISHOP.

[August 28.]



ST. AUGUSTINE was born in the year 354, at Tagaste, a small town of Numidia, in Africa. His parents were in good circumstances, yet not very rich; his father was an idolater, but by the holy example and prudent conduct of St. Monica, his wife, he at length learned the humility and meekness of the Christian religion, and was baptized a short time before his death. Augustine went to school first in his own town; then his father, who perceived Augustine's excellent genius and wonderful disposition for learning, sent him to Madaura, a neighboring city, where he studied grammar, rhetoric and poetry. When he was sixteen years old, his father made



him return to Tagaste and kept him a year at home. During this time the young man, disregarding the advice of his mother, fell into lewd company, being induced to it by idleness. Towards the end of the year 370 he was sent to Carthage. There he easily held the foremost place in the school of rhetoric, and applied himself to his studies with so much eagerness and pleasure that it was with great difficulty he was drawn from them. But his motives were only vanity and ambition. Once when reading the Holy Scriptures, he was offended with the simplicity of the style, and puffed up with pride, as if he was endowed with a great genius, he could not relish their humility, or penetrate their spirit. When about nineteen he fell into the heresy of the Manichees, in which he continued for eight or nine years. In his twentieth year, to ease his mother of the expense of his education, his father having already died, St. Augustine left Carthage, and set up a school of grammar and rhetoric at Tagaste. Here St. Monica employed all efforts, admonitions, entreaties and severity to convert her son, but all were vain. By the loss of an intimate friend who had been for several years the companion of his studies, Augustine was afflicted so grievously that all places and things he had previously enjoyed, were turned into bitter torment. Not being able any longer to bear his native country, he removed to Carthage, where time and new connections wore away his grief. At Carthage he opened a school of rhetoric, and gained great applause in the public disputations. Here St. Augustine met the Manichean bishop Faustus, from whom he expected the solution of many doubts. He found that Faustus was a good speaker, but said no more than the rest of the Manichees, only explained himself with greater grace and facility. He now disapproved entirely of the Manichean sect, but his prejudices against the Catholic faith hindered him from turning his inquiries on that side.

Being disgusted by the disorderly behavior of the students at Carthage, he resolved to go to Rome. There he lodged with a Manichean, merely on account of former acquaintance, and because he was not resolved to become a member of any other religion. His school was soon frequented by the greatest geniuses of that age, and none ever went from it without being struck with admiration for his learning and talents. But finding the scholars there often unjust enough not to pay salaries to their masters, he grew weary of the place. It happened about this time that deputies were sent from Milan to Symmachus, the prefect of Rome, requiring that he should send thither an



able master of rhetoric. Augustine having given proofs of his capacity, was selected by Symmachus and accordingly sent. At Milan he became acquainted with the holy bishop St. Ambrose, and frequently attended his sermons. Although Augustine aimed only at gratifying his ears, and despised the matter of which the bishop treated, the sermons, like a distilling rain, insensibly made impressions on his heart, and caused the seed of virtue to spring forth therein. In the search for truth he was still perplexed about the origin of evil, and suffered a secret anguish in his soul, to which only God was witness. It happened in the mean time that one Potitianus, an African, who had an honorable employment in the emperor's court, and was a very religious man, came one day to pay a visit to Augustine and his friend Alipius; finding a book of St. Paul's Epistles lying on the table, he took occasion to speak to them of the life of St. Anthony, and was surprised to find that his name had been to that hour unknown to them. Potitianus also related the example of two friends of his, who by reading the life of St. Anthony, became so inflamed with the love of God as immediately to embrace the same kind of life. This discourse had a powerful influence on the mind of St. Augustine. When Potitianus had departed, he withdrew from his friend Alipius, threw himself under a fig-tree, and there gave free vent to a torrent of tears. Whilst thus weeping with most bitter contrition of heart for his past life, he on a sudden heard as it were the voice of a child singing the words: "Tolle, lege, tolle, lege," that is, take up and read, take up and read. He interpreted the voice to be nothing less than a divine admonition, remembering that St. Anthony was converted from the world to a life of retirement by hearing a passage of the gospel read. He immediately rose, suppressed his tears, and returned to look for the book of St. Paul's Epistles. He opened it, and read the following words on which he first cast his eyes: "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and envy: but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences." (*Rom. xiii. 13. 14.*) He would read no further; all his former hesitation was dispelled, all his doubts solved. He told Alipius what had passed in his soul; they immediately told the good news to St. Monica, who had followed her son into Italy, and came to him at Milan.

The conversion of St. Augustine happened in the year 386, and the thirty-second of his age. At the same time he determined to give up his school and profession as teacher



of rhetoric. He retired to a country house in the neighborhood of Milan, where he employed himself wholly in prayer and study. Here he strenuously labored, by the practice of austere penance, by the strictest watchfulness over his heart and senses, and by most fervent and humble prayer, to purify his affections, to disengage them perfectly from the inordinate love of creatures, and to prepare himself for the grace of leading a new life in Christ, and becoming in Him a new man. In the beginning of the Lent of 387, Augustine returned to Milan to prepare himself for baptism, which he received from St. Ambrose on Easter eve of the same year. Soon after, desiring to devote himself entirely to the divine service in a life of solitude, he resolved to return to Africa. On his way thither he lost his holy mother, St. Monica, who died at the seaport of Ostia. He landed at Carthage about September, 388, made only a very short stay, making all possible haste to retire to his house in the country, with certain devout friends. There he lived almost three years entirely disengaged from all temporal concerns, serving God in fasting, prayer, good works, meditating upon His law day and night, and instructing others by his discourses and books. In the house all things were in common, and were distributed according to every one's necessities, no one among them having the least thing at his own disposal. The religious order of the hermits of St. Augustine dates its foundation from this epoch in 388. When St. Augustine was ordained priest and removed to Hippo, many of his religious brethren followed him, and with the assistance of his bishop Valerius, he founded there a new monastery. Valerius, who was a Greek, and had, moreover, an impediment in his speech, appointed Augustine to preach to the people in his own presence. Augustine preached constantly, sometimes every day, and sometimes twice on the same day. He did not desist even when he was so weak as to be scarce able to speak; but he seemed to gather strength in preaching, and his ardor for the salvation of souls made him forget the pains of sickness. Valerius finding himself sinking under the weight of his years and infirmities, had Augustine chosen as his coadjutor. Although the saint protested, he was at length compelled to acquiesce to the will of heaven and was consecrated in the year 395. Valerius died the following year.

In this new dignity the saint was obliged to live in the episcopal house; but he engaged all the priests, deacons and subdeacons who lived with him, to renounce all property, and to engage themselves to embrace the rule which



he established there. The saint's clothes and furniture were very plain. He exercised hospitality, but his table was frugal. At meals he loved reading or literary conferences rather than secular conversation, and to warn his guests to shun detraction, he had the following distich written upon his table:

This board allows no vile detractor place,  
Whose tongue will charge the absent with disgrace.

He employed whatever could be spared of the revenues of his church in relieving the poor; he even sometimes melted down part of the sacred vessels to redeem captives. He prevailed upon his flock to establish the custom of clothing all the poor of each parish once a year.

Augustine always trembled at the danger of secret complacency, or vain glory amidst the praise of others. Sincere humility made him love, at every turn, to confess his ignorance. Nothing caused him greater confusion and mortification than the esteem of others, or their opinion of his learning. From this sincere humility the saint wrote his "Confessions", a book in which he divulges all the sins of his youth, and in which he shows the ways by which the divine mercy led him to repentance and conversion.

Augustine was indefatigable in refuting the heretics, who were at his time very numerous in the northern part of Africa. Indeed at Hippo, the Donatists were, before the arrival of the saint, so numerous that the Catholics formed but a small minority. By the learning and indefatigable zeal of Augustine, supported by the sanctity of his life, the Catholics began to gain ground. At this the Donatists were so much exasperated that some of them proposed to kill him, and even made several attempts to accomplish their desire, all of which, however, were foiled. He wrote many works against these heretics, as also against the Manichees, the Pelagians, the Jews and the pagans.

About the year 428 northern Africa was visited by a terrible scourge. The Vandals, under Genseric, with an army of 80,000 men, sailed from Spain to Africa. Possidius, Bishop of Calama, an eye witness, describes the dreadful ravages by which the Vandals filled with horror and desolation all those rich provinces. He saw the cities in ruin, the houses in the country razed, the inhabitants either slain or gone. Within a short time there were only three cities remaining that were not in ruins: Carthage, Hippo and Cirtha. About the end of May in the year 430, the Vandals appeared before Hippo. The siege continued fourteen months. Augustine did all in his power to alle-



viate the miseries of the besieged, he consoled the dying, tended the wounded and fed the poor. He spoke much to his people on resignation to the divine will under all the scourges which their sins deserved, and the necessity of averting the divine anger by sincere penance. In the third month of the siege the saint was seized with a fever and from the first moments of his illness doubted not that it was a summons of God who called him to Himself. He ordered the penitential psalms of David to be written out, and hung in tablets upon the wall by his bed; and as he lay there sick, he read them shedding many tears. Not to be interrupted in these devotions, he desired, about ten days before his death, that no one should come to him, except at those times when either the physicians came to visit him, or his food was brought to him. This was strictly observed, and all the rest of his time was spent in prayer. Though the strength of his body daily and hourly declined, his senses and intellectual faculties continued sound to the last. He calmly resigned his spirit into the hands of God, on the 28th of August, 430. The body of the saint was brought to Sardinia, and thence to Pavia, where it now rests in the church named after him, St. Augustine.

PRAAYER OF THE CHURCH. Give ear to our supplications, almighty God; and as Thou hast given us grace to trust in thy loving kindness, so by the intercession of blessed Augustine Thy confessor and bishop, grant us of Thy goodness the fruit of Thy accustomed mercy. Thro.' &c.

EPISTLE. (ii. *Tim.* iv. 1—8.) DEARLY BELOVED, I charge thee before God and Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead, by his coming, and his kingdom: preach the word, be instant in season, out of season: reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine. For there shall be a time when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned unto fables. But be thou vigilant, labor in all things, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry. Be sober. For I



am even now ready to be sacrificed, and the time of my dissolution is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. As to the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord the just judge will render to me in that day: and not only to me, but to them also that love his coming.

*The Gospel is the same as on the Feast of St. Bernard.*

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. ROSE OF LIMA.

*(August 30.)*



ST. ROSE was born in 1586 at Lima, the capital of Peru, of poor but noble Spaniards. Her baptismal name was Isabella; the appearance of her face while still an infant resembled a beautiful rose, hence the name Rose was given her. The little girl was of a most attractive exterior, a quiet disposition, and so amiable in her ways that she was a universal joy to all the house.

In her tenderest age she already manifested signs of patience and endurance in sufferings. Once the cover of a chest fell upon and crushed her right thumb, but she kept it quiet and concealed until the finger had festered so badly that the surgeon was obliged to amputate it. Upon another occasion, when a most painful operation was undertaken upon her, she uttered no complaint, though she trembled through pain. It was the spirit of religion and self-denial that enabled her to act thus. Her elder brother once happened to soil her hair, whilst playing with her; that vexed her a little, but her brother pithily retorted: "This long hair and these braids of girls are only so many snares with which the devil tries to entangle and bind young men." Such words touched her to the quick; apprehending danger on all sides, she fled to God, her only refuge, entreating Him to assist her with His grace; she offered her entire self to Him, vowing chastity for life, in testimony of which she cut off her beautiful hair. Jesus, now her only love, wonderfully led her to a higher spiritual life, her parents on the other hand urged her to partake of the vanities of the





world. Her mother, proud of the beauty of Rose, always pressed her to dress as gayly as possible, poor as she was; she would have her decorate her head with flowers and ribbons, use powder wear corals and beads about her



neck and arms. Rose patiently suffered these vain commands and obeyed with bitter grief, but with the flowers she would press thorns upon her head; in one instance she fastened a wreath of flowers with a pin to her scalp in order to suffer more under the appearance of vain decoration.

In all these things she was a most loving and self-sacrificing child; she labored with unwearied diligence, doing all in her power to assist her parents, who suffered greatly from poverty.

When she had arrived at the age suitable for marriage, she was to be espoused to the son of a rich widow; all negotiations had been settled without the least knowledge on the part of Rose, who would by all means remain a faithful spouse to Jesus. She refused to give her hand under any condition, though her mother entreated, threatened and even chastised her with the rod; many were the troubles and the tears she caused Rose, who was strengthened from above to resist all inducements to change her holy resolution.

When twenty years of age, she obtained permission to enter the third Order of St. Dominic, in which condition she was still allowed to live at her home. Having entered this state of life, she increased her mortifications to a greater extent than ever before: she ate little, and coarse food at that; she nearly always slept upon blocks of wood and potsherds, at most she made use of boards; she wounded her tender body with an iron girdle, which she so contracted that it sunk deeply into her flesh; in order to be unable ever to relieve herself of the continual pain, she closed the girdle with a padlock, of which she threw away the key, so that she could not find it again; she always wore a wreath of metal from which stood forth many points, piercing her head.

Her parents and relatives looking upon this as extreme folly strove by every, even abusive, means to induce her to abandon her practices; these were wounds the more painful as they were inflicted by those dearest to her on earth. With the invincible power which she drew from Jesus, her once suffering spouse, she would not abandon her holy mode of life, which can only be admired, scarcely imitated. Her daily occupations were prayer and labor, spending ten hours in work, twelve in prayer and only two in sleep.

It was very natural that in consequence of such exceeding mortifications she should often suffer great bodily pain; scarcely ever was she free from oppressive sufferings.



When broken down and exhausted by many and great pains, she would try to conceal all as well as possible, and she suffered everything with a patience which seemed more angelic than human. But this amiable Rose in the garden of God could not always enjoy the consolations with which she was overwhelmed, for, besides the astonishing sufferings of the body, she was to pass through the ordeal of spiritual dryness, anguish and desertion. It is impossible to imagine how heavily these trials bore upon her. Besides the devil himself appearing to her visibly in all his hideous forms, she felt her soul all empty and overcast with an apparently impenetrable darkness. She would force the thought of a speedy death upon her mind, in order to console herself, but how cruelly was she deceived? Instead of finding consolation she was tempted to doubt the immortality of her soul; moreover, the thought of being destined to hell pressed so much upon her that she could scarcely live. In her undaunted faith she would in spite of all cry out imploringly: "O my God, O my gracious God, why hast Thou forsaken me? O my God, how long wilt Thou yet remain irritated at me, and how long must my heart yet sigh for Thee?" It seemed all was to be in vain, she was ever haunted by the same cruel thoughts in whatsoever occupation she would find herself. — She stood the trial, and the gloomy night was followed by a day so much the brighter; henceforth the grace of God, the dew of heaven, refreshed her heart, so parched by the fire of a terrible trial; now she was all buried in God and nothing could separate her from the love of Christ.

Our lovely saint could scarcely wait for the day of her dissolution; at length the day of her heavenly espousal arrived. She was thirty-one years of age when she was attacked with her last illness; her limbs were all paralyzed, and a painful fever brought her near death; physicians' aid availed nothing; all stood amazed at seeing this living image of our suffering Saviour.

During all these pains St. Rose maintained an unspeakable peace of mind and the full use of her senses. Having received the holy Eucharist, she bade farewell to all about her, and breathing the words, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus be with me", she expired on the 24th of August, 1617. After death her body assumed the beauty of a living person and a sweet smile seemed to hover about her lips. Thus she appeared a Rose after death, as she had been during life. Many authentic miracles have been wrought through her intercession. Pope Clement X. canonized her in 1671, setting



apart this day for her festival. St. Rose is the first canonized saint of America.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O almighty God, giver of all good gifts, who wast pleased that blessed Rose, abundantly favored with the dew of heavenly grace, should beautify the Indies with her purity and patience: grant, that we Thy servants, following the perfume of her virtues, may become an agreeable odor to Christ. Thro.' &c.

EPISTLE. (ii. *Cor.* x. 17. — xi. 1—2.) BRETHREN, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved; but he whom God commendeth. Would to God you could bear with some little of my folly, but do bear with me. For I am jealous of you with the jealousy of God. For I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxv. 1—13.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus spoke to his disciples this parable: The kingdom of heaven shall be like to ten virgins, who, taking their lamps, went out to meet the bridegroom and the bride. And five of them were foolish, and five wise: but the five foolish, having taken their lamps, did not take oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with the lamps. And the bridegroom tarrying, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made: Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise: Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out. The wise answered, saying: Lest perhaps there be not enough for us and for you, go you rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. Now whilst they went to buy, the bridegroom came: and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. But at last came also the other vir-



gins, saying: Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered, saying: Amen I say to you, I know you not. Watch ye, therefore, because you know not the day nor the hour.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

[September 8.]



*Why does the Church celebrate this festival?*  
BECAUSE the day of the Blessed Virgin's birth is one of universal joy to the whole world.

*Why does Mary's birth cause such great joy?*

To this the Church answers beautifully in the antiphon of the Magnificat: "O Virgin, Mother of God, Thy birth has announced joy to the whole world, for from Thee has proceeded the Sun of Justice, Christ our Lord, who, by taking away the curse, has shed benediction and who, by confounding death, has given us everlasting life." This curse, caused by the sin of our first parents in paradise, burdened the whole earth and especially mankind, for "sin having come into the world by one man, it passed upon all, since all have sinned in this one."

It was in consequence of original sin that the human race was covered with such darkness as to ignore its Creator, whilst on the other hand it prostrated itself before creatures and adored idols of its own construction.

Finally, the hour of redemption had come. The infant was born, who was predestined by God to become the mother of the promised Saviour, and who was consequently to crush the head of the serpent. This festival ought then to spread joy through the world, since, after such ardent desires, salvation is at last about to appear! For Jesus, the Saviour, our Lord and God, the Light of the world, the Sun of Justice, is to come forth from Mary; that darkness which had overshadowed all nations, is about to disappear, the knowledge of God shall abound, the bonds of sin, in which mankind lay fettered, shall be loosed, the curse so long resting upon creation shall be taken away,—in a word,



the fulness of benediction shall reign upon earth. To-day even death is put to shame, for she is born, from whom shall come forth the Conqueror of death, who depriving it of its sting, shall guide us unto perpetual life. Such are the glorious hopes that Mary's birth awakens in us, promising at the same time the speedy fulfilment of them. Then, as St. Peter Damian says, let us rejoice in Mary, the most blessed Mother of God, for she bears a new message unto the world, being the beginning of man's salvation; let us rejoice in the day on which was born the Queen of the World, the Gate of Heaven, the Portal of Paradise, the Tent of God, the Star of the Sea and the Ladder of Heaven, upon which the Supreme King in infinite humility deigned to descend to us, and upon which we may rise from our dust to heaven. To-day the most glorious Virgin is born, from whom shall proceed, as a bridegroom from his chamber, the most beautiful of the sons of men; to-day she leaves her mother's womb, who deserves to be the temple of God.

At the Introit of the Mass the Church sings: Hail, holy parent, who didst bring forth the King, who rules heaven and earth for ever. My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the King. (*Ps.* xliv.) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Vouchsafe, Lord, we beseech Thee, to us Thy servants, the gift of Thy heavenly grace: that as in the childbirth of the blessed Virgin our salvation began, so from the votive solemnity of her Nativity we may obtain an increase of peace. Thro.' &c.

LESSON. (*Prov.* viii. 22—35.) THE Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, before he made anything, from the beginning. I was set up from eternity, and of old, before the earth was made. The depths were not as yet, and I was already conceived: neither had the fountains of waters as yet sprung out: the mountains with their huge bulk had not as yet been established: before the hills I was brought forth: he had not yet made the earth, nor the rivers, nor the poles of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was present; when, with a cer-



tain law and compass, he enclosed the depths; when he established the sky above, and poised the fountains of waters; when he compassed the sea with its bounds, and set a law to the waters, that they should not pass their limits; when he balanced the foundations of the earth. I was with him, forming all things, and was delighted every day, playing before him at all times, playing in the world; and my delights were to be with the children of men. Now, therefore, ye children, hear me: Blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, and that watcheth daily at my gates, and waiteth at the posts of my door. He that shall find me shall find life, and shall have salvation from the Lord.

EXPLANATION AND APPLICATION. Above all, this lesson is a eulogy on the divine, uncreated Wisdom, the eternal Son of God, through whom all is made, arranged and provided, who rejoices at and loves His works, and invites man to love, follow and worship Him, whilst He extends to him temporal and eternal happiness in return. The Church, however, reads this lesson on this festival, because the most of it is also applicable to Mary. For, truly, she can be said to excel all creatures in holiness, and to enjoy a place nearer to God than any other being. And for this reason does the Church refer to her these words of the Wise Man: "I came out of the mouth of the most High, the first-born before all creatures." (*Ecclus.* xxiv. 5.) For she is, as St. Richard says, the most worthy of all, and no one can ever arrive at the full measure of her purity or any of her supernatural gifts; nor, therefore, does any creature display the wonders of God's bounty in a degree equal to that of Mary. Do thou then, also, O pious soul, admire this master-piece of the Almighty and rejoice in it. But let not mere admiration suffice; hear the words that Mary addresses to you in this lesson: "Now, therefore, ye children, hear me: Blessed are they that keep my ways," (*Prov.* viii. 32.) which means, follow her footprints, walking before God in humility, innocence and meekness as she has done. "Blessed is the man that heareth me, and that watcheth daily at my gates, and waiteth at the posts of my door." (*Ib.* 34.) According to St. Alphonsus, Mary ad-



dresses us thus: "Blessed is he who listeneth to my counsels, and tireth not at the gate of my mercy, invoking my intercession and aid. He that shall find me, shall find life, and shall have salvation from the Lord." St. Bonaventure also exclaims: "All ye who thirst for the kingdom of God, O hear what is promised you, namely, life and salvation, if ye but honor Mary." Therefore often make use of the following words of St. Chrysostom: "Hail Mary, Mother of God and our Mother, hail Heaven in which dwelleth God Himself, hail Throne of grace, whence God distributeth His graces unto us, oh, ever intercede for us with Jesus, so that owing to thy prayer we may obtain pardon of our sins and eternal happiness."

GOSPEL. (*Matt. i. 1—16.*) THE book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham begot Isaac. And Isaac begot Jacob. And Jacob begot Judas, and his brethren. And Judas begot Phares and Zara of Thamar. And Phares begot Esron. And Esron begot Aram. And Aram begot Aminadab. And Aminadab begot Naasson. And Naasson begot Salmon. And Salmon begot Booz of Rahab. And Booz begot Obed of Ruth. And Obed begot Jesse. And Jesse begot David the king. And David the king begot Solomon, of her that had been the wife of Urias. And Solomon begot Roboam. And Roboam begot Abias. And Abias begot Asa. And Asa begot Josaphat. And Josaphat begot Joram. And Joram begot Ozias. And Ozias begot Joatham. And Joatham begot Achaz. And Achaz begot Ezechias. And Ezechias begot Manasses. And Manasses begot Amon. And Amon begot Josias. And Josias begot Jechonias and his brethren in the transmigration of Babylon. And, after the transmigration of Babylon, Jechonias begot Salathiel. And Salathiel begot Zorobabel. And Zorobabel begot Abiud. And Abiud begot Eliacim. And Eliacim begot Azor. And Azor begot Sadoc. And Sadoc begot Achim. And Achim begot Eliud. And Eliud begot Eleazar. And Eleazar begot Mathan. And



Mathan begot Jacob. And Jacob begot Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

*Why does St. Matthew commence his gospel by enumerating Christ's birth according to the flesh?*

In order to confute those sectarians who affirmed that Christ's body was not real, but only a phantom. Hence it is that St. Matthew enumerates singly the forefathers from whom Christ descended according to His sacred humanity.

*Why are even sinful women mentioned in the genealogy of Christ?*

In order to show that Christ, who for the sake of sinners came down from heaven, disdained not to descend from such, in order to inspire all sinners with the hope of salvation and to take away the sins of all. Moreover, this is to teach us that we need not blush at the faults of parents or relatives, provided we do not share them; nor need we at all be ashamed of their humble condition, for true nobility is displayed in our own virtues and not in the deeds of our ancestors.

*Why is Joseph's, and not Mary's, genealogy read?*

Because it was customary among the Jews for wards to receive the name, and also to inherit the rights of their foster-fathers, such as Joseph was to Jesus; and Mary, being the only daughter of her father, and therefore sole heiress, was obliged to take a husband out of her own tribe and family, according to the law; (*Num. xxxvi. 6.*) hence it follows that Mary was of the tribe of David. St. Luke details this in chapter iii. (23-38.) of his gospel, where he gives Mary's genealogy, enumerating her ancestors from Adam to Heli, that is, Joachim, the father of Mary.

*Why does St. Matthew not say, Joseph begot Jesus, but only mentions Joseph as Mary's husband?*

To evince that Jesus was not begotten in Mary by Joseph, but supernaturally by the Holy Ghost. (*Luke i. 31-35.*)

Oh most pure and spotless Virgin! how beautiful and perfect thou art. Never hast thou suffered from a single stain. I desire that all the world should recognize thee as that perfect and spotless dove which thy divine bridegroom declares thee to be; as that closed up garden, the favorite dwelling-place of God; as that pure lily growing among



thorns, that is, the children of Adam, who come into the world already sullied with sin and as enemies to God. I too am born a sinner, yea, after baptism I have voluntarily stained my soul by sins. Oh, then, Immaculate Mother, do thou assist me in recovering my innocence, so that Jesus, thy Son, may at the hour of my death receive me into the number of His elect. Amen.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS.

[September 14.]



*From what does this feast derive its name?*

FROM the yearly commemoration of the erection of the holy cross, at Jerusalem, by Constantine the Great, son of St. Helena.

*When was this festival celebrated with especial solemnity?*

When the Cross which Cosroes, King of the Persians, had captured at the conquest of Jerusalem, and had for forty years in his power, was recaptured by the Emperor Heraclius, who carried it himself on his own shoulders to Mount Calvary into the Church of the Holy Cross.

*What miracle occurred on this occasion?*

When the emperor wished to carry the Cross on his own shoulders to Jerusalem, at the entrance of the city he stopped suddenly, finding it impossible to proceed. The patriarch Zachary suggested to him to lay aside his imperial garments which did not accord with the humble appearance which Christ made when He bore His cross through the streets of that city. Hereupon the emperor laid aside his purple, crown and shoes, and devoutly proceeded with the cross to its appointed place.

Let us learn from this, how the divine Saviour dislikes extravagance in dress, and how in all humility and poverty we should follow Him who was poor and humble.

*[For further Instruction on the Holy Cross, as also the Epistle of this day, see the Festival of the Finding of the Holy Cross.]*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who dost gladden us this day with the yearly solemnity of the



exaltation of the Holy Cross: grant, we beseech Thee, that as we have learnt to know its mystery on earth, so we may merit to taste in Heaven the reward of its redemption. Thro.' &c.

GOSPEL. (*John* xii. 31—36.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to the multitudes of the Jews: Now is the judgment of the world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself. (Now this he said, signifying what death he should die.) The multitude answered him: We have heard out of the law, that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou: The Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man? Jesus therefore said to them: Yet a little while, the light is among you. Walk whilst you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not: and he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. Whilst you have the light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light.

### SHORT INSTRUCTION ON THE WAY OF THE CROSS.

*What is meant by the Way of the Cross?*

**T**HE Way of the Cross is a devotion, approved by the Pope, by which we meditate upon the passion and death of Christ, and especially upon His last way of sorrow to Mount Calvary.

*How did this devotion originate?*

The pathway which our Lord Jesus Christ had to follow from Jerusalem to Mount Calvary, was the real Way of the Cross. His holy Mother, and other pious women, as also the beloved disciple St. John, followed Him on this painful journey; (*Matt.* xxvii. 56. *John* xix. 25, 26.) and the apostles and early Christians animated by veneration for these places, made sacred by the sufferings and death of Jesus, often traversed the same pathway. In the same spirit, in later times, many came from the most distant countries to Jerusalem to visit these sacred places to increase their devotion. In time, pictures, representing dif-



ferent scenes of the sufferings of our Lord, were erected along this route, and were called Stations; when the Saracens conquered the Holy Land, in consequence of which visits to it became dangerous, almost impossible, the Roman pontiffs permitted the erection of stations of the cross in other countries. The first to erect stations in their churches were members of the Franciscan Order, and by degrees this devotion, supported by the Roman pontiffs and favored by indulgences, spread throughout the entire Church. A pathway was sought which led to elevated ground; this elevation was called the Mount of the Cross or Mount Calvary, and along the route pictures representing our Lord's sufferings, as related by the evangelists, or made known by tradition, were erected, or else the pictures were hung in churches, and the place where they stood, or the pictures themselves, were called stations; of these there are fourteen.

*Is the practice of this devotion of the Way of the Cross of great value?*

Next to the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and holy Communion, there is certainly no devotion which represents better to us the sufferings and death of Christ than the Way of the Cross. St. Albertus Magnus says: "A simple remembrance of Christ's sufferings is worth more than fasting on bread and water every Friday for a year, and scourging one's self unto blood." St. Bernard gives us the reason of this, when he says: "Who can consider the sufferings of Christ and be so void of religion as to remain untouched; so proud that he will not humble himself; so vindictive that he will not forgive; so fond of pleasure that he will not abstain from it; so hard-hearted that he will not repent of his sins?" And St. Augustine says: "What pride, what avarice, what anger can be cured otherwise than by the humility, the poverty, the patience of the Son of God? All these virtues are found in carefully meditating on that way of pain which our Saviour went, and along which we should follow Him." On this account several of the Popes, among others Clement XII. and Benedict XIV., have granted many indulgences to the performance of this devotion; indulgences which may be applied to the suffering souls in purgatory.

*[For the manner of meditating on the sufferings of Christ, see the Instruction on Good Friday.]*

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. MATTHEW, APOSTLE.

[September 21.]

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**M**ATTHEW, before his conversion called Levi, was a Galilean, a son of Alphaeus, (*Mark* ii. 14.) consequently a brother of St. James the Less, another of the apostles. (*Mark* iii. 18.) Matthew was a collector of the toll which the Jews were obliged to pay to the Roman emperors, and from his custom-house was called by our Lord to be an apostle. In his gospel which he wrote later, he calls himself through humility always by his early appellation, Matthew the Publican. He followed Jesus faithfully, and after the descent of the Holy Ghost remained, as the historical writers Eusebius and Epiphanius inform us, in Judea and its neighborhood, until just before the destruction of Jerusalem, when the apostles dispersed and went into foreign lands to preach the doctrine of Christ. When obliged to separate from the recent converts in Jerusalem, Matthew wrote his gospel to leave with them. He led a rigorous life, prayed much, never touched meat, and lived on herbs, roots and wild fruits. He was killed at the altar by the Ethiopian king Hirtacus, while offering the sacrifice of the Mass, for refusing consent to the king's marriage with the virgin Eugenia who was dedicated to God. His sacred remains were, in the tenth century, brought to Salerno, Naples, where they are still highly venerated.

Matthew was the first to write a gospel. How proper it is that he who, after many sins, becomes converted, should be the first to announce the infinite mercy of the Redeemer who came into this world not to call the just, but sinners.

In the Introit of the Mass, the Church sings: The mouth of the just shall meditate wisdom, and his tongue shall speak judgment: the law of his God is in his heart. Be not emulous of evil doers: nor envy them that work iniquity. (*Ps.* xxxvi.) Glory &c.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** Grant, Lord, that we may be assisted by the prayers of Thy blessed apostle and evangelist Matthew, and may that which of our



own strength we cannot obtain be granted to us by his intercession. Thro.' &c.

LESSON. (*Ezech. i. 10—14.*) THE likeness of their countenances was of four animals: there was the face of a man, and the face of a lion on the right side of all the four; and the face of an ox on the left side of all the four: and the face of an eagle over all the four. And their faces and their wings were stretched upward: two wings of every one were joined, and two covered their bodies: and every one of them went straight forward: whither the impulse of the spirit was to go, thither they went, and they turned not when they went. And as for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like that of burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps. This was the vision running to and fro in the midst of the living creatures, a bright fire, and lightning going forth from the fire. And the living creatures ran and returned like flashes of lightning.

EXPLANATION. The four living creatures who were Cherubim, that is, powers of heaven, many holy fathers understand to be emblems of the four Evangelists, as these represent Christ in His fourfold attributes of Man, King, Priest and God. The image of a man is given to St. Matthew as an emblem, because he relates the birth of Christ according to the humanity; that of a lion to St. Mark, because he describes Christ as king; and as the Jews offered cattle in sacrifice, and as St. Luke represents Christ as High Priest who was Himself the sacrifice, therefore the ox is given to him; that of an eagle is given to St. John, because he soared like an eagle to the heavenly heights, speaks of the divinity of Christ, and of His being begotten by the Father from all eternity.

GOSPEL. (*Matt. ix. 9—13.*) AT THAT TIME, Jesus saw a man sitting in the custom-house, named Matthew. And he said to him: Follow me. And he rose up, and followed him. And it came to pass, as he was sitting at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and



his disciples. And the Pharisees seeing it, said to his disciples: Why doth your master eat with publicans and sinners? But Jesus hearing it, said: They that are in health need not a physician, but they that are ill. Go, then, and learn what this meaneth: I will have mercy, and not sacrifice. For I am not come to call the just, but sinners.

*Why were the publicans so hated by the Jews?*

Because the Jews regarded it unjust and sinful that they should be subjected to the pagan Romans, and obliged to pay taxes to them; as the publicans purchased from the Romans the right to collect taxes and were desirous to receive a large proportion of them for themselves, they were guilty of much injustice and extortion, were therefore hated by the Jews, and regarded as so unprincipled that the words publican and sinner became synonymous.

*What do we learn from Matthew's promptness in following Christ?*

That we should at once obey the call to penance, lest Christ may cease to call, and withdraw His grace from us; that we should not only avoid sin, but also the occasions of it, as Matthew did in abandoning the business of a publican, which gave him opportunities for sin.

*How did he live after his conversion?*

After his conversion Matthew strove to be like Christ, poor, humble, meek, patient and charitable; for he who wishes to follow Christ, must walk as He walked, (i. *John* ii. 6.) must take up his cross of daily trials, and patiently carry it after Christ.

*Why was Jesus willing to eat with sinners?*

That He might use the occasion to convert them by giving His doctrine as food for their souls.

Well would it be for us, if at our meals, instead of vain and often quarrelsome conversation, we were to speak of God and sacred things, thus gaining souls for God, and promoting His honor. St. Dionysius says, among all good things which are agreeable to God, the greatest and, so to say, most god-like, is to aid in the conversion of sinners.



*Who are those in health, who the sick, who the physician?*

Those in health are the just who live in the grace of God. O what a valuable life is this, and what great care is required to preserve it! The sick are the sinners, for every sin makes the soul unclean, wounds and even kills it, that is, robs it of the grace and good will of God, in which consists the spiritual life of the soul. How detestable, then, is sin, which deprives us of our greatest good! The physician is Christ of whom it is said in Psalm cvi. 20.: He sent his word, and healed them. If you have sinned, go to this Physician to be healed that you may regain the health of your soul.

*Why does Christ say: I will have mercy and not sacrifice?*

Because the Pharisees valued external sacrifice, and thought if they offered it frequently, that they were already pleasing to God, even though they showed no mercy and struggled not against their corrupt inclinations to anger, envy, malice and pride. The sacrifice of our prayers, our good works and mortifications, will not please God, unless they proceed from pure love of Him.

*What did Christ mean by saying: I am not come to call the just, but sinners?*

SS. Hilary, Jerome and Venerable Bede understand the former to be the Pharisees, who pretended to be just in all things, and would not listen to the voice of Jesus, even if He had called them; Jesus knowing this, called those whom the Pharisees regarded as very great sinners, who, however, humbly heard and followed His call.

PRAYER TO ST. MATTHEW. O holy Apostle, who after thy conversion didst prepare Christ a fine banquet, and a yet more glorious feast for us in thy holy gospel, for it is like the book which the angel gave to Ezechiel to eat, and which was as sweet as honey in his mouth, (*Ezech. iii. 3.*) may it be a food for my soul. Implore for me the grace to read it with attention and in the spirit and meaning of the holy Catholic Church, to meditate upon it, and to live in accordance with thy words, written by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, so that I may say with the Psalmist: How sweet are thy words to my palate, more than honey to my mouth. (*Ps. cxviii. 103.*)

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF THE HOLY ARCHANGEL MICHAEL.

[September 29.]



HE Prophet Daniel calls the holy Angel Michael the prince of the angels; (x. 13.) the holy Apostle Judas Thaddæus names him an archangel, and John in the Apocalypse describes the contest between him and Lucifer, in which St. Michael drove the latter out of heaven. Who then can doubt that the Archangel Michael from the beginning of the world's creation has been highly honored by God? Several miraculous visions of this holy archangel on Mount Gargano in Italy and at Tuba in France, and many wonderful graces which God granted through his intercession, gave special occasion, in the sixth and seventh centuries, to his public veneration and to the institution of festivals in his honor. He is also deserving of special honor, because God has given him to His holy Church as her protector, as He had previously given him to the Jewish synagogues. As St. Michael carefully guarded the Jewish people entrusted to him, in like manner he protects the children of God's Church, preserving them in the true faith, defending them against temptations in life, but especially against the attacks of Satan in the hour of death, for which reason our mother, the Church, exhorts us to turn often to this holy archangel, saying: "Holy Archangel Michael, protect us in the battle, that we may not perish at the terrible judgment."

The Introit of the Mass is: Bless the Lord, all ye His angels, you that are mighty in strength, and execute His word, hearkening to the voice of His orders. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and let all that is within me bless His holy name. (*Ps. cii.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who disposest the services of angels and men in a wonderful order: mercifully grant that those who ever stand before Thee, ministering to Thee in heaven, may themselves also protect our life here upon earth. Thro.' &c.



LESSON. (*Apoc.* i. 1—5.) IN THOSE DAYS, God signified the things which must shortly come to pass, sending by his angel to his servant John, who hath given testimony to the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ, what things soever he hath seen. Blessed is he that readeth and heareth the words of this prophecy, and keepeth those things which are written in it: for the time is at hand. John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you and peace from him that is, and that was, and that is to come: and from the seven spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth, who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

EXPLANATION. This lesson is the beginning of the mysterious revelation which St. John received on the Island of Patmos, and in which, in a series of allegories, he presents a perfect picture of the fate of the Church of God, from its first contest until its final victory, at the end of the world. The seven spirits before the throne of God, are those holy angels to whom God has given the greatest power to work for our salvation, among them the holy Archangel Michael.

See how good God is to us, since He gives us such powerful spirits, the nearest to His throne, to be our special protectors.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xviii. 1—10) AT THAT TIME, the disciples came to Jesus, saying: Who, thinkest thou, is the greater in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus calling unto him a little child, set him in the midst of them, and said: Amen I say to you, unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greater in the kingdom of heaven. And he that shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me. But he that shall scandalize one of



these little ones that believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of scandals. For it must needs be that scandals come: but nevertheless, woe to that man by whom the scandal cometh. And if thy hand or thy foot scandalize thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to go into life maimed or lame, than, having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thy eye scandalize thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee having one eye to enter into life, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire. See that you despise not one of these little ones: for I say to you, that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.

LESSONS. I. Christ had often distinguished Peter above the other apostles—particularly on account of his zealous faith, owing to this the others, not yet enlightened by the holy Ghost, became jealous and addressed Jesus this question: Who is the greater in the kingdom of heaven? Jesus, who saw into the recesses of their hearts and knew well that true humility was yet wanting to the apostles, took a child, placed it in their midst and said: If you do not become as humble, simple, open, confiding and believing as children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. So necessary is humility to the Christian!

II. From the dreadful punishment with which Christ threatens him who scandalizes a child—that is to say, who leads it by words or actions to wickedness—is to be inferred what a dreadful sin scandal is. It is indeed not possible, as Christ says, on account of the great moral depravity of the children of men that scandals should not come, but “Woe to that man by whom the scandal cometh.” What a sin must that be, at whose wickedness the gentle Jesus cries out: “Woe!” — Beware of giving any one occasion to sin, that upon you this woe may not come!

III. Christ commands us to cut off and throw away the members that offend us, whereby He teaches us that if we love anything in the world as well as a hand or an eye and it gives us occasion to sin, we must separate our-



selves from it earnestly and at once.—If, therefore, you observe that your heart has pleasure in anything that does not lead to God, but rather to sin, then leave and forsake it, for it is better to lose a temporal good, an earthly joy, for the sake of God, than to suffer eternal torment.

IV. But the strongest motive which is to keep us from causing any scandal is, because we offend God and by such an offence afflict the holy angels, who for this will one day be our severest and strictest accusers.

### PRAYER TO THE ARCHANGEL MICHAEL.

Great prince of heaven, St. Michael, I commend my body and soul to thy protection, from this day henceforth I choose thee for my daily protector and intercessor, and I beseech thee graciously to assist me now and at all times, but especially at the end of my life. Keep me from timidity and obtain for me from God the remission of my sins and complete resignation to His divine will, so that my soul, consoled and cheerful, may leave my body; receive her then according to thy office, and lead her through the ranks of thy holy comrades to the face of God, in the enjoyment of whose presence she will be eternally blessed. Amen.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF THE HOLY GUARDIAN ANGELS.

[October 2.]

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*Why was this Festival instituted?*

O thank God that He has given to each of us a special angel to lead us through the dangers of this world to heaven; 2. that we may show ourselves grateful to the holy angels, who have done us so much good.

*Is it certain that every one has a special guardian angel?*

Yes; for many passages in Holy Scriptures attest it;  
ii. *Exod.* xxiii. 20, 21. — *Ps.* xxxiii. 8; *xc.* 11. — *Job.*



xxxiii 23. — *Acts. xii. 15*, but especially the words of Christ: "See that you despise not one of these little ones: for I say to you that their Angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven;" (*Matt. xviii. 10.*) which words of the Saviour the holy Catholic Church has always expounded to mean that to every one is given a special guardian angel.

*What is the office of guardian angels?*

To protect us from dangers of body and soul. So it is written in *Ps. xc. 11.*: "For he hath given his angels charge over thee; to keep thee in all thy ways. In their hands they shall bear thee up: lest thou dash thy foot against a stone," that is, that thou mayest not sin or fall into any other misfortune. "Oh what a great favor of God," exclaims St. Bernard, "O what wonderful love! Who has commanded? . . . . God! Whom has He commanded? . . . . The angels, those noble spirits who share God's home! What has He commanded them? . . . . To protect and guard us poor mortals! O Lord! what is man that Thou art mindful of him!" The holy guardian angels perform the greatest service for the soul. They protect us in dangers and temptations, warn us against evil, encourage us to good, offer to God our prayers and stand by us in the hour of death. Yea, they minister to us after death, as Christ said that the poor Lazarus was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. (*Luke xvi. 22.*)

*Have wicked men also a holy guardian angel?*

God protects the body of even the most hardened sinner, that he may not perish before the time, but the holy angel can have no pleasure in a sinner. St. Basil the Great says: "As smoke scatters the bees, and offensive smell disperses the doves, so does horrible, lamentable sin turn from us the angel, the guardian of life. But if a sinner repents: then there is joy in heaven, as the Saviour asserts: There shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance! (*Luke xv. 10.*)

*What do we owe our guardian angel?*

According to the doctrine of St. Bernard: Reverence on account of his presence; Gratitude for the solicitude he has for us; Confidence and Love, by virtue of which we turn to him and entreat his protection in all difficulties and temptations.



*What consolation does the presence of our guardian angel give us?*

That of being fearless and courageous in all dangers of body and soul, for "of whom need we be afraid," writes St. Bernard, "with such powerful protectors?" They cannot be conquered or led away, they protect us in all our paths. They are faithful, mighty and wise, why should we tremble? Only let us follow them, cling to them, and remain under the protection of God, the Lord of Heaven.

*What ought we to do on this day?*

We ought to spend the day in a most devout manner, reverencing our holy guardian angel, and thanking him for all the benefits received through the course of our whole life, ask his pardon for the vexations we may have caused him through our sins, recommend ourselves again to his protection and promise him constant fidelity and obedience.

PRAYER. Almighty, eternal God! Thou, who in Thy great goodness hast given to every man a guardian angel, grant that I may honor, love and obey my guardian angel, that through Thy grace and his protection, I may be saved and with him behold in heaven Thy divine face for all eternity.

Holy guardian angels, defend us in the combat that we may not perish on the dreadful Day of Judgment.

*[The Introit is the same as on the feast of St. Michael. September 29th.]*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who in Thy unspeakable providence vouchsafest to send Thine angels to keep guard over us: grant unto Thy suppliants that we may be continually defended by their protection, and rejoice eternally in their society. Thro.' &c.

LESSON. (*Exod.* xxiii. 20—23.) Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will send my angel, who shall go before thee, and keep thee in thy journey, and bring thee into the place that I have prepared. Take notice of him and hear his voice, and do not think

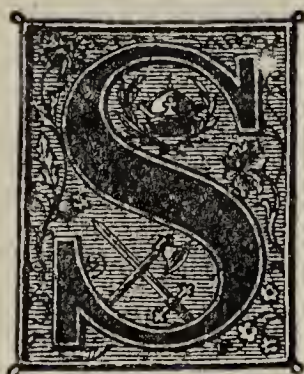


him one to be contemned: for he will not forgive when thou hast sinned, and my name is in him. But if thou wilt hear his voice, and do all that I speak, I will be an enemy to thy enemies, and will afflict them that afflict thee: and my angel shall go before thee.

*[For Gospel and Explanation see Feast of St. Michael.]*

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FESTIVAL OF THE HOLY ROSARY.

*[First Sunday in October.]*



T. DOMINIC preached for a long time with untiring zeal against the heresy of the Albigenses, but few returned to the Church; he, therefore, redoubled his prayers and penitential works, and with special devotion besought the Queen of Heaven to assist him in his labors for the salvation of souls. The Mother of Mercy then appeared to him and taught him the rosary. Strengthened by the high privilege shown him by the Mother of God, he everywhere announced and taught this devotion. In a short time over a hundred thousand heretics were brought back to the bosom of the holy Catholic Church, and the devotion spread rapidly over the whole Christian world. Fraternities were formed and the Supreme Pontiff permitted the Friar Preachers to celebrate the Festival of the Rosary; this was observed with great solemnity. On the 7th of October 1571, the Christians, under the special protection of Mary, the Queen of Heaven, gained a glorious victory over the Turks; the Festival of the Rosary being at that time celebrated at Rome and in the provinces by public processions, in order that by her intercession the Turks might be restrained in their oppressions. This victory was justly considered as the effect of Mary's intercession, and the holy Pope Pius V. instituted on this day in gratitude a festival which was called "Mary of Victory". This was united by Pope Gregory XIII. with the Festival of the Rosary, and fixed for the first Sunday in October. Finally, on account of another victory gained by Mary's intercession over the Turks in 1715 at Belgrade,





Pope Clement XI. ordered it to be celebrated by the whole Church, "that the hearts of the faithful might be thereby incited to the greater veneration of the Blessed Virgin, and that the grateful remembrance of the help received from above might never pass away."

*What is the rosary?*

It is a form of prayer in which there is said the Apostles' Creed, the Glory be to the Father, &c. and fifty times the Hail Mary, with an Our Father before each ten Hail Marys; each decade is followed by a meditation upon one of the mysteries of the redemption. This is the smaller and more common rosary. The larger consists of the Apos-



bles' Creed, of fifteen decades, every decade of ten Hail Marys preceded by an Our Father, and of fifteen meditations on the mysteries of our redemption. It is called the Psalter, because it contains a hundred and fifty Hail Marys as David's psalter contains a hundred and fifty psalms.

This prayer is called the rosary, because every Hail Mary is like a flower in the wreath crowning the heavenly Queen, whom the Church calls by the significant title of "Mystical Rose." Every rose has green leaves and sharp thorns besides the flower itself; in the rosary the thorns represent the sorrowful, the green leaves the joyful, and the flower the glorious mysteries of the redemption which are meditated upon while reciting the rosary. The holy Fathers also compare this devotion to a crown, of which they say: "Its twelve diamonds are the twelve articles of the Apostles' Creed, the fifteen Our Fathers so many brilliant golden stars, and one hundred and fifty Hail Marys the roses."

*How many parts are there in the rosary?*

Three: the joyful, the sorrowful and the glorious.

I. The joyful are the first five decades by which we meditate upon the mysteries of the Incarnation and the joy of Mary's heart in her divine Child.

This rosary is usually said from Advent until Lent, during which time the Church commemorates the joyful coming of Christ.

II. The sorrowful has also five decades in which are especially represented for meditation the sorrowful mysteries of the passion of Christ.

This rosary is usually said during Lent, because the Church at that time places before us the sufferings of Jesus.

III. The glorious mysteries have likewise five decades, in which we meditate upon the glory of Christ and His blessed Mother.

This rosary is said from Easter to Advent, because the Church then presents to us these mysteries for our veneration and meditation.

## METHOD OF SAYING THE ROSARY OF OUR BLESSED LADY.

**T**HE method consists in raising corresponding affections in the heart during the recital of each decade, such as the devotion of each one may suggest; for example, in the first part, sentiments of joy for the coming of our



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Redeemer. In the second, of compassion for the sufferings of our Lord, and contrition for our sins, which were the occasion of them. In the third, of thanksgiving for the exaltation and the glory of our Saviour, and His Blessed Mother, hoping through the merits of His passion and her intercession to be made partakers of their glory.

### THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES.

*Assigned for Mondays and Thursdays throughout the Year, the Sundays in Advent, and after Epiphany till Lent.*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

I believe in God, &c.

V. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

R. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

V. Thou, O Lord, wilt open my lips.

R. And my tongue shall announce thy praise.

V. Incline unto my aid, O God.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son. and to the Holy Ghost.

R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

*Alleluia* is said at all times, except from *Septuagesima* till *Easter*, during which period say: Praise be to thee, O Lord, King of eternal glory.

#### *I. The Incarnation.*

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how the angel Gabriel saluted our Blessed Lady with the title full of grace, and declared unto her the Incarnation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Our Father, &c. *once*. Hail Mary, &c. *ten times*.

#### LET US PRAY!

O Holy Mary, Queen of virgins, through the most high mystery of the Incarnation of thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, by which our salvation was so happily begun: obtain for us, through thy intercession, light to be sensible of the greatness of the benefit He hath bestowed on us, in vouchsafing to become our Brother, and thee, (his own beloved Mother) to be our Mother also. Amen.



*II. The Visitation.*

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how the Blessed Virgin Mary, understanding from the angel that her cousin, St. Elizabeth, had conceived, went with haste into the mountains of Judea to visit her, and remained with her three months. Our Father, &c. *once*. Hail Mary, &c. *ten times*.

## LET US PRAY!

O Holy Virgin, most spotless Mirror of humility, by that exceeding charity which moved thee to visit thy holy cousin, St. Elizabeth, obtain for us, through thy intercession, that our hearts being visited by thy most holy Son, and freed from all sin, we may praise and give thanks for ever. Amen.

*III. The Birth of our Saviour in Bethlehem.*

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how the Blessed Virgin Mary, when the time of her delivery was come, brought forth our Redeemer Jesus Christ at midnight, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for Him in the inns at Bethlehem. Our Father, &c. *once*. Hail Mary &c., *ten times*.

## LET US PRAY!

O most pure Mother of God, through thy virginal and most joyful delivery, whereby thou gavest the world thy only Son our Saviour; we beseech thee to obtain for us, through thy intercession, the grace to lead such pure and holy lives in this world, that we may become worthy to sing without ceasing, both day and night, the mercies of thy Son, and his benefits to us by thee. Amen.

*IV. The Offering of our Blessed Lord in the Temple.*

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how the Blessed Virgin Mary, on the day of her purification, presented the child Jesus in the Temple, where holy Simeon giving thanks to God, with great devotion received Him into his arms. Our Father, &c. *once*. Hail Mary, *ten times*.



## LET US PRAY!

O Holy Virgin, most admirable mistress and patroness of obedience, who didst present in the Temple the Lord of the Temple: obtain for us, of thy beloved Son, that with holy Simeon and devout Anna, we may praise and glorify Him for ever. Amen.

*V. The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple.*

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how the Blessed Virgin Mary, after having lost, without any fault of hers, her beloved Son in Jerusalem, sought Him for the space of three days, and at length found Him the third day in the Temple, in the midst of the doctors, disputing with them, being of the age of twelve years. Our Father &c. *once.* Hail Mary, &c. *ten times.*

## LET US PRAY!

Most Blessed Virgin, more than martyr in thy sufferings, and yet the comfort of such as are afflicted; by that unspeakable joy wherewith thy soul was ravished at finding thy beloved Son in the Temple, in the midst of the doctors, disputing with them: obtain of Him that we may so seek Him, and find Him in the holy Catholic Church, as to be never more separated from Him. Amen.

## SALVE REGINA.

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope; to thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears: turn, then, most gracious advocate, thy eyes of mercy towards us, and after this our exile is ended, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus! O clement, O pious, O sweet Virgin Mary.

*V.* Pray for us, O holy mother of God.

*R.* That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.



LET US PRAY!

O God, whose only-begotten Son, by His life, death and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life; grant, we beseech thee, that meditating upon these mysteries, in the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may both imitate what they contain, and obtain what they promise. Thro'.

THE DOLOROUS OR SORROWFUL MYSTERIES.

*For Tuesdays and Fridays throughout the Year, and the Sundays in Lent.*

*I. The Prayer and Bloody Sweat of our Blessed Saviour in the Garden.*

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how our Lord Jesus was so afflicted for us in the Garden of Gethsemane, that His body was bathed in a bloody sweat, which ran trickling down in great drops to the ground. Our Father, &c. *once.* Hail Mary, &c. *ten times.*

LET US PRAY!

Most holy Virgin, more than martyr, by that ardent prayer which thy beloved Son poured forth unto His Father in the Garden, vouchsafe to intercede for us, that our passions being reduced to the obedience of reason, we may always, and in all things, conform and subject ourselves to the will of God. Amen.

*II. The Scourging of our Blessed Lord at the Pillar.*

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how our Lord Jesus Christ was most cruelly scourged in Pilate's house, the number of stripes they gave Him (as it was revealed to St. Bridget) being about five thousand. Our Father, &c. *once.* Hail Mary, &c. *ten times.*

LET US PRAY!

O Mother of God, overflowing fountain of patience, through those stripes thy only and most beloved Son vouchsafed to suffer for us: obtain of Him for us grace, that we may know how to mortify our rebellious senses, and cut off all occasions of sinning, with



that sword of grief, and compassion which pierced thy most tender soul. Amen.

*III. The Crowning of our Blessed Saviour with Thorns.*

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how those cruel ministers of Satan plaited a crown of sharp thorns, and most cruelly pressed it on the sacred head of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Father, &c. *once*. Hail Mary, &c. *ten times*.

LET US PRAY!

O Mother of our eternal Prince and King of glory, by those sharp thorns, wherewith His most holy head was pierced, we beseech thee, that, through thy intercession, we may be delivered from all motions of pride, and in the day of judgment, from that confusion which our sins deserve. Amen.

*IV. Jesus carrying His Cross.*

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how our Lord Jesus Christ being sentenced to die, bore, with the most amazing patience, the cross, which was laid upon Him for his greater torment and ignominy. Our Father, &c. *once*. Hail Mary, &c. *ten times*.

LET US PRAY!

O Holy Virgin, example of patience, by the most painful carrying of the cross in which thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ bore the heavy weight of our sins; obtain for us, of Him, through thy intercession, courage and strength to follow His steps, and bear our cross after Him unto the end of our lives. Amen.

*V. The Crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how our Lord Jesus Christ, being come to Mount Calvary, was stripped of His clothes, and His hands and feet most cruelly nailed to the cross in the presence of His most afflicted Mother. Our Father, &c. *once*. Hail Mary, &c. *ten times*.

LET US PRAY!

O Holy Mary, Mother of God, as the body of thy beloved Son was for us extended on the cross,



so may our desires be daily more and more extended in His service, and our hearts wounded with compassion for His most bitter passion; and thou, O most Blessed Virgin, graciously vouchsafe, by thy powerful intercession, to help us to accomplish the work of our salvation. Amen.

*The Salve Regina.* — Hail, holy Queen, &c. with the verse and prayer as on page 885.

## THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES.

*For Wednesdays and Saturdays throughout the Year, and the Sundays from Easter until Advent.*

### *I. The Resurrection.*

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how our Lord Jesus Christ, triumphing gloriously over death, rose again the third day, immortal and impassible. Our Father, &c. *once*. Hail Mary, &c. *ten times*.

### LET US PRAY!

O glorious Virgin Mary, by that unspeakable joy thou receivedst in the resurrection of thine only Son, we beseech thee obtain of Him for us, that our hearts may never go astray after the false joys of this world, but may be ever and wholly employed in the pursuit of the only true and solid joys of heaven. Amen.

### *II. The Ascension.*

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how our Lord Jesus Christ, forty days after His resurrection, ascended into heaven, attended by angels, in the sight and to the great admiration of His most holy mother, and His holy apostles and disciples. Our Father, &c. *once*. Hail Mary, &c. *ten times*.

### LET US PRAY!

O Mother of God, comfortress of the afflicted, as thy beloved Son, when He ascended into heaven, lifted up His hands and blessed his apostles, so vouchsafe, most holy Mother, to lift up thy pure hands to Him for us, that we may enjoy the benefit of His blessing, and thine also on earth, and hereafter in heaven. Amen.



*III. The Descent of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles.*

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how our Lord Jesus Christ, being seated on the right hand of God, sent, as He had promised, the Holy Ghost upon his apostles, who, after He was ascended, returning to Jerusalem, continued in prayer and supplication with the Blessed Virgin Mary, expecting the performance of His promise. Our Father, &c. *once.* Hail Mary, &c. *ten times.*

## LET US PRAY!

O sacred Virgin, tabernacle of the Holy Ghost, we beseech thee, obtain by thine intercession, that this most sweet Comforter whom thy beloved Son sent down upon his apostles, filling them thereby with spiritual joy, may teach us in this world, the true way of salvation and make us walk in the path of virtue and good works. Amen.

*IV. The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven.*

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how the glorious Virgin, twelve years after the resurrection of her Son, passed out of this world unto Him, and was by Him assumed into heaven, accompanied by the holy angels. Our Father, &c. *once.* Hail Mary, &c. *ten times.*

## LET US PRAY!

O most prudent Virgin, who entering the heavenly palace didst fill the holy angels with joy, and man with hope, vouchsafe to intercede for us at the hour of our death, that being delivered from the illusions and temptations of the devil, we may joyfully and securely pass out of this temporal state, to enjoy the happiness of eternal life. Amen.

*V. The Coronation of the most Blessed Virgin Mary in Heaven.*

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how the glorious Virgin Mary was, to the great jubilee and exultation of the whole court of heaven, and the special glory of all the saints, crowned by her Son with the brightest diadem of glory. Our Father, &c. *once.* Hail Mary, &c. *ten times.*



## LET US PRAY!

O glorious Queen of all the heavenly citizens, we beseech thee, accept this Rosary, which as a crown of roses we offer at thy feet: and grant, most gracious Lady, that, by thy intercession, our souls may be inflamed with so ardent a desire of seeing thee so gloriously crowned, that it may never die in us, until it shall be changed into the happy fruition of thy blessed sight. Amen.

*The Salve Regina.*—Hail, holy Queen, &c.

*The Litany of The Blessed Virgin.*

*Are unbelievers, and those who call themselves enlightened Catholics, right when they look with contempt upon the rosary?*

Certainly not, for they despise that which they neither understand nor practice; for whoever considers the arrangement and significance of this most venerable prayer, must esteem it most highly and practice it for the good of his soul. Without taking into consideration that the greatest saints said this prayer daily, as for example St. Francis de Sales, St. Alphonsus Liguori and others, it is a confession of our holy Roman Catholic faith, a repeated adoration of the most holy Trinity, and an authorized veneration of the Blessed Virgin, whom the Holy Ghost has pronounced blessed. It is at the same time a grateful recollection and meditation upon the most profound and sacred mysteries of our holy religion, and especially of our redemption through the incarnation, sufferings, and death of our Lord. And in regard to the frequent repetition of the Our Father and Hail Mary, do not the angels and saints before the throne of the most holy Trinity repeat continually: "Holy, Holy, Holy!" Can the heart filled with the true, sincere love of God and of Mary repeat their praises often enough? Do we not daily, even often during the day, partake of the same bread without it losing its relish or becoming distasteful to us?

How acceptable to God is this holy rosary—this beautiful garland of fragrant, heavenly flowers of prayer and meditation—and what powerful effect it produces before the throne of His omnipotence and mercy! This God manifested at its introduction, as He has always since in a marvellous manner, especially upon occasions of great and particular hardships and cares; and on this account the Church exhorts the faithful to its diligent practice, attach-



ing many indulgences which she grants to all those who say the Rosary devoutly in the state of grace.\*

Do not, therefore, my dear Christian, permit yourself to be misled by those who not only do not perform this devotion, but even despise it, and in their proud self-conceit often pay no attention to the most important regulations of the Church. To them are applicable the words of Christ: I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones. (*Matt. xi. 25.*) Practice this devotion all the more zealously in the spirit and sense of our holy Church, and you will perceive the benefit that will accrue to your soul therefrom.

We should let nothing prevent us from saying the rosary and never be ashamed to carry our rosary with us, always as a sign that we love and honor Jesus and Mary. For the rosary has justly become a badge of the true follower of Jesus and Mary, of the real Catholic; and who is ashamed of being a Catholic!

*(The Introit of the Mass is the same as on the Feast of the Assumption.)*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, whose only-begotten Son, by His life, death and resurrection, hath purchased for us the rewards of eternal salvation: grant, we beseech Thee, that meditating upon these mysteries in the most holy Rosary of the blessed Virgin Mary, we may both imitate what they contain, and arrive at what they promise. Thro.' &c.

LESSON. (*Ecclus. xxiv. 14—16.*) FROM the beginning and before the world, was I created, and unto the world to come I shall not cease to be, and in the holy dwelling-place I have ministered before him. And so was I established in Sion, and in the holy city likewise I rested, and my power was in Jerusalem. And I took root in an honorable people, and in the portion of my God his inheritance, and my abode is in the full assembly of saints.

*[For Explanation see the Festivals of the Assumption and the Immaculate Conception. The Gospel and its Explanation will be found in the Instruction on the third Sunday of Lent, beginning with the twenty-seventh verse.]*

\* As by Pope Alexander IV. in the year 1291, Sixtus V. in 1474, and Pius V. an indulgence of five years and forty days.



## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI.

[October 4.]



**S**T. FRANCIS was born at Assisi, a city in the dukedom of Spoleto, Italy, in the year 1181. His father, a rich merchant, destined him for the same avocation, in which Francis skillfully engaged. Although fond of show he, at a very early age, manifested a great love for the poor. Agreeable and kind-hearted, amiable and pleasant to all, he was beloved by all around him, and the world sought to secure him for its own, but the love of God conquered the love of the world; enlightened from on high, and by heavenly vision rendered attentive to the call he was about to receive, he followed the guidings of grace which drew him to follow Christ in humility and poverty. Hearing one day at Mass the words: Do not possess gold, nor silver, nor money in your purses; nor scrip for your journey, nor two coats, nor shoes, nor a staff, (*Matt. x. 9. 10.*) he regulated his whole life by them, commenced immediately to preach penance with such evangelical poverty and with so much power that all who heard him were moved to tears. Disinherited by his avaricious father, who was greatly displeased at his poverty and generosity to the poor, Francis threw himself entirely upon the providence of his Father in heaven, begging from door to door, and dividing the alms he thus obtained with the poor.

This extraordinary manner of life soon brought him disciples, for whom, as their number increased, he wrote a rule of life, and then journeyed to Rome to have it approved by the Pope. He returned, full of holy rejoicing, that all had succeeded at Rome as he wished, and settled beside a little church, belonging to the Benedictines, about a mile from the place of his birth, which he called Portiuncula (small portion). Here he lived in the performance of the severest penance; here he prayed day and night, and here he laid the foundation of that Order which was to fill the whole earth with the splendor of its virtues. In this church, which was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and to the holy angels, he received from Christ Himself the celebrated indulgence known by the whole Christian world as the Portiuncula Indulgence.





In the year 1221, on the anniversary of the church's consecration, while the saint was praying there with fervent devotion, our Lord appeared to him, and said: "Francis, demand what thou wilt for the salvation of nations." "I ask," replied the saint, "the remission of the guilt and punishment, a plenary indulgence for all that shall visit this church with a contrite heart and confess their sins." "Go,



then," said our Lord, "to my representative, the Pope, and demand this indulgence in my name." Francis went at once to the Pope, Honorius III., who first by word of mouth, and later by a proper Bull confirmed the indulgence, which was afterwards extended to all the churches of the Franciscan Order.

Inflamed with the desire for the salvation of nations, Francis with his brethren whom he sent out two and two to preach penance and the peace of God, exerted himself to spread everywhere the kingdom of God. His love for sinners and his ardent zeal for the salvation of souls, urged him to visit distant parts of the world to preach the gospel to the infidels. For this also God rewarded him with marvellous graces, among which may be especially noticed those which he received on Mount Alverno. While he was here, removed from the world, fasting and praying for forty days, our Lord appeared to him in the form of a Seraph on a cross, and imprinted the five wounds of His own body upon the body of the saint. On this account and because of his ardent love for Christ crucified, St. Francis received the surname of Seraph.

After this the saint lived for two years in manifold bodily distresses and sicknesses, without murmur or complaint, and with perfect resignation to the will of God. Some time before his death he made his will, in which he left poverty as an inheritance to his brethren, wherein they would find heavenly treasures. As the hour of his dissolution drew near, he had the history of the passion of our Lord read to him, then said the one hundred and forty-first psalm and expired at the words: "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Thy name." This happened on the 4th of October in the year 1226, in the forty-fifth year of his age.

St. Francis founded three Orders: the first and proper Order of Franciscans; the Order of the Friars Minor; the Order of the Franciscan Nuns or Clares, so called from their first Prioress St. Clara; and lastly, that called the Third Order, for the people in the world, of both sexes, who aim at perfection, but do not desire to take the vows of the cloister. This last Order, which has been sanctioned by many Popes, especially by Gregory IX., Innocent IV., and Nicholas IV., has spread throughout the whole world, and is becoming even in our days more flourishing.

EPISTLE. (*Gal.* vi. 14—18.) Brethren, God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord



Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And whosoever shall follow this rule, peace on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. From henceforth let no man be troublesome to me: for I bear the marks of the Lord Jesus in my body. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

*[The Gospel is the same as on the Feast of St. Matthias.]*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who through the merits of blessed Francis dost enlarge Thy Church by the progeny of a new offspring: grant unto us that, by imitating him, we may despise earthly things, and ever rejoice in the participation of heavenly gifts. Thro'. &c.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. PLACIDUS, ABBOT AND MARTYR.

*[October 5.]*



**S**T. PLACIDUS was born about the year 515. Tertullus, his father, a noble Roman patrician, committed him in 522 to the care of the great St. Benedict, where his son, whilst his heart was yet untainted by the world, might happily escape its contagion. He advanced daily in holy wisdom, and in the exercise of all virtues, so that his life seemed a true copy of that of his master and guide, St. Benedict, who seeing the great progress which divine grace made in his tender heart, always loved him as one of the dearest among his spiritual children. Pope Gregory the Great relates that Placidus once being about to bring water from the lake Sublaco fell into the same. St. Benedict, who was at the monastery, immediately knew of this accident, and sent Maurus to him saying; "Brother, run, make haste; the child has fallen into



the water." Maurus begged his blessing, ran to the lake, and walked upon the water above a bow-shot from the land to the place where Placidus was floating, took him by the hair and came back with the same speed. Having reached the land, and looking behind him, he saw he had walked upon the water, which he had not perceived until then. St. Benedict ascribed this miracle to the ready obedience of Maurus, but St. Maurus attributed it to the command and blessing of St. Benedict. Placidus decided the dispute by saying: "When I was taken out of the water I saw the abbot's melotes upon my head, and himself helping me out." In the year 528 St. Benedict took Placidus with him to Monte Cassino. The holy abbot afterwards founded a monastery near Messina in Sicily. Of this new colony St. Placidus was made abbot; he was then about twenty-six years of age. He lived only a few years in Sicily. A horde of pirates came to the shore of the Island, and out of hatred of the Christian name and religious profession of these servants of God, put Placidus and his fellow monks to death, and burned their monastery about the year 546.

Introit of the Mass: The salvation of the just is from the Lord; and He is their protector in the time of trouble. Be not emulous of evil doers; nor envy them that work iniquity. (*Ps. xxxvi.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who grantest us to celebrate the birthday to immortality of Thy holy martyrs Placidus and His companions, grant to us to rejoice in their society in eternal blessedness. Thro'. &c.

EPISTLE. (*Hebr. x. 32—38.*) BRETHREN, call to mind the former days, wherein, being illuminated, you endured a great fight of afflictions: and on the one hand indeed, by reproaches and tribulations were made a gazing-stock: and, on the other, became companions of them that were used in such sort. For you both had compassion on them that were in bonds, and took with joy the being stripped of your own goods, knowing that you have a better and a lasting substance. Do not, therefore, lose your confidence, which hath a great reward. For patience is necessary for you, that



doing the will of God, you may receive the promise. For yet a little and a very little while, and he that is to come, will come, and will not delay. But my just man liveth by faith.

EXPLANATION. The former days which the apostle wishes to recall to the converted Hebrews, to whom he writes this epistle, is the time of their first fervor; the time, when they received the light of faith by holy baptism; the time when they had, for their faith, to bear persecutions and tribulations. St. Paul then exhorts them to be careful **not to lose** their confidence, that is, their good works and merits, the spiritual treasures gained by such hardships and combats, on account of which they were justified in having the greatest confidence of gaining one day eternal reward. For, continues he, patience, that is, perseverance to the end of life is necessary that you may be fitted to possess heavenly goods promised to the victorious. This shall not be long, for Christ will soon come to judge and give reward to the faithful and true, and punishment to the unfaithful. In the meanwhile my just man liveth by faith, and in the midst of tribulation he is strengthened by this hope. By these words: my just man liveth &c. good works are by no means excluded but rather included, for when we say that a man makes his living by the art of painting, we understand that he practices that art.

GOSPEL. (*John* xii. 24—26.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: Amen, amen I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, keepeth it unto life everlasting. If any man minister to me, let him follow me: and where I am, there also shall my minister be. If any man minister to me, him will my Father honor.

*Who is the grain of wheat?*

Christ calls Himself the grain of wheat which was to die, and dying multiplied itself. It was to die through the infidelity of the Jews, but multiply itself in an infinite measure through the faith of all the nations. (St. Augustine.) Thus if we die to the world, that is, mortify ourselves, we will bring much fruit for eternal life.



*Who loves his life, and who hates it?*

Those who live for the pleasures of this world, love the worldly life, but these will perish in the end, and besides losing them will also lose the true life, that is, life eternal in heaven; those who hate their life are those who hate the sinful pleasures of this world, and mortify their worldly appetites; these will gain eternal life in heaven.

*Who follow Christ?*

Those who are faithful unto death in time of peace, mortifying themselves by dying, as it were, to the pleasures of this world and its lusts, and in time of persecution even unto martyrdom; this is called following Christ.

*How will the Father honor him who follows Christ on earth?*

He will give him to participate in the eternal honor and glory of His only-begotten Son.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. EDWARD, KING AND CONFESSOR.

[October 13.]



T. EDWARD, surnamed the Confessor, was the son of Ethelred II. He was nursed in the wholesome school of adversity, the mistress of all virtues. The heart of the young prince seemed almost naturally weaned from the world by early feeling the experience of its falsehood, deceitfulness and miseries. Though educated in the palace of the duke of Normandy, he was always an enemy to vanity, pleasure and pride. The arms by which he triumphed over them were, at the same time, the means by which he grounded his heart in the rooted habits of the contrary virtues. To the incredible joy of the whole kingdom he was anointed and crowned king on Easter day in 1042, being about forty years of age. When king his sole aim was to promote the glory of God and the comfort and relief of his distressed people. He succeeded in restoring perfect peace to his people who had been most barbarously kept in subjection by the Danes for forty years.



St. Edward had conceived from his youth the greatest esteem and love for the precious treasure of purity, and preserved this virtue both in mind and body without stain. He delighted in religious foundations, restored and built churches from his own royal patrimony. His love for Christ, and his faith were so great that he was frequently rewarded at the sacrifice of Mass by seeing the divine Saviour refulgent with heavenly light. On account of his great charity to the poor and the orphans he was generally called "Father". He was illustrious by the gift of prophecy and foretold much concerning the future of England. He also had a particular love and devotion to St. John the apostle, and never refused any just and reasonable request that was made him for the sake, or in the name of that saint. St. John in recompense for his devotion, forewarned our saint of his approaching death. Being taken ill he prepared at once for his passage to eternity by the exercises of devotion, and the reception of the sacraments of the Church. In his last moments seeing his noblemen all bathed in tears around his bed, and his affectionate and virtuous queen sobbing more vehemently and weeping more bitterly than the rest, he said to her with great tenderness: "Weep not, my dear daughter; I shall not die, but shall live. Departing from the land of the dying, I hope to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living." Commending her to her brother Harold, he declared he had left her a virgin. He calmly expired on the 5th of January in 1066, in the sixty-fourth year of his age, having governed his people twenty-three years and six months. Never was a king more sincerely or more justly regretted by his subjects. Pope Alexander III. canonized him in 1161. His festival was first observed on the 5th of January. Two years after the canonization his body was transferred by St. Thomas of Canterbury, in the presence of King Henry II. and many persons of distinction, on the 13th of October, on which day his festival is now celebrated.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who hast crowned the King Edward, Thy confessor, with a diadem of glory: grant, that we may honor him in such a manner on earth as to reign hereafter with him in heaven. Thro'. &c.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. SIMON AND ST. JUDE, APOSTLES.

[October 28.]



It is not known when, where, or in what manner St. Simon was called by Christ to be an apostle. Like the other apostles, he became after his call a constant witness of the actions and doctrines, of the humiliation and exaltation of his divine Master, and after the reception of the Holy Ghost he made himself worthy of his surname, by his zeal in preaching the gospel. He preached the gospel in Egypt and other countries of Africa, and finally met the Apostle St. Jude in Persia, where they both received the palm of martyrdom.

St. Jude, son of Mary, who was aunt to the Blessed Virgin, was a near relation of the Saviour, and called, according to the custom of the Jews, His brother; he was surnamed Thaddaeus, to distinguish him from Judas Iscariot. Of St. Jude it is also unknown at what time and in what manner he came to be one of the disciples. At the Last Supper when our Lord said that He would manifest Himself to those who loved Him, St. Jude asked: "Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest thyself to us and not to the world?" After receiving the Holy Ghost, Jude preached the gospel in Judea and Samaria, then in Syria and Mesopotamia. After meeting with St. Simon in Persia, both were martyred; St. Jude was beheaded. His glowing zeal is shown in an epistle which he wrote to the faithful to encourage them to perseverance in faith.

*(For the Introit of the Mass see the Feast of St. Andrew.)*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who by Thy blessed Apostles Simon and Jude hast brought us to a knowledge of Thy name: grant us to celebrate their eternal glories by advancing in all virtue, and by the same celebration to be ourselves advanced. Thro'. &c.

EPISTLE. (*Ephes.* iv. 7—13.) BRETHREN, to every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the giving of Christ. Wherefore he saith:



Ascending on high, he led captivity captive: he gave gifts to men. Now, that he ascended, what is it, but because he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended above all the heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: until we all meet into the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul here teaches that graces are not given to all men in the same measure, but distributed according to the wise providence of God. Therefore we should not envy those who possess more gifts than we, nor should we be uplifted on account of those we possess, for God gives to each as many as are useful and necessary for him. The psalmist's words: Ascending on high, he led captivity captive: he gave gifts to men, mean that Christ, after descending into limbo and redeeming the patriarchs from their captivity, led them, on the day of His ascension, in triumph to heaven, and ten days afterwards bestowed upon men the gifts of the Holy Ghost. Of these gifts some were bestowed upon the apostles, who were to preach the gospel everywhere and to found congregations; others upon the prophets, who had the gift of prophesying and expounding the Scriptures, subject to the superintendence of the apostles; others upon the evangelists, who managed the spiritual affairs of single congregations for the perfection of the faithful, who are all called to sanctity, for the performance of divine service, that is, preaching, celebrating the holy Sacrifice, administering the Sacraments, and building up the body of Christ, that is, His Church, that we may all obtain unity and perfection in faith and love, and be not any longer like weak, fickle children, but perfect men, and like to Christ.

Let us then give God thanks, that He gives us so many apostolic men for our teachers, who strengthen us in faith, and show us the way to heaven. Let us also pray that there may some day be one fold and one shepherd and that all the faithful follow Christ on earth, that they may partake of His glory with Him in heaven.



GOSPEL. (*John* xv. 17—25.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: These things I command you, that you love one another. If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own: but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember my word that I said to you: The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you: if they have kept my word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for my name's sake: because they know not him that sent me. If I had not come, and spoken to them, they would not have sin: but now they have no excuse for their sin. He that hateth me, hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no other hath done, they would not have sin: but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father. But that the word may be fulfilled which is written in their law: They hated me without a cause.

INSTRUCTION. I. Since Christ, His apostles and disciples, were hated and persecuted by the world, the greatest courage and consolation should be the portion of those who have to suffer because they are not of this world, that is, do not follow its false and foolish principles, its vain and vexatious customs. Those who suffer nothing for Christ's sake and who to escape the mockery and hatred of the world, side with it rather than with Christ, may learn by these words to be ashamed of their cowardice. For as it is considered a great honor for a servant to resemble his lord, so it is considered shameful for him to seek to be greater than his lord. The servant is not greater than his master, says Christ. If then Christ, our Lord, has suffered the hatred and persecution of the world, why should His servants refuse to suffer it also? Can the world's hatred harm us when God loves us? Does not this very hatred serve to separate us more from the world and unite us more with God? And is it not better to have the world for our enemy than God?



II. Priests can derive great consolation from this, that the servant is not greater than the master, when, notwithstanding all their toil and trouble, they produce no good and receive only the world's derision and sneers. Did not Christ, the Word made Flesh, endure the same? are you disturbed and distressed that the same occurs to you, a weak man? Besides, our reward consists not in the good accomplished, which does not depend upon us, but in this, that we work for the honor of God and the salvation of souls; the reward will not be withheld, though we gain none or but a single soul for God.

III. Ignorance is not always an excuse for sin; for Christ says, the Jews cannot excuse themselves for not acknowledging Him, because if they had wished, they might have known Him by His works. They are, therefore, to be greatly punished and deserve to be cast away. In the same way the heretics are culpable, and indeed all Catholics who, like the Jews, could easily learn what they have to believe and do, but who fail to do so, either through negligence or fear of the world, and thus by their own fault remain in ignorance, thereby causing their condemnation for all eternity. It is different with those who through no fault of theirs have never heard of Christ and the true faith; for they will not be condemned because of their ignorance of the faith, for which they are not reprehensible, but on account of the sins which they commit against their conscience and the natural law which is written in every man's heart, the observance of which would result in their being enlightened by God who would show them the way to the true faith.

IV. Christ says of the Jews that they hated Him without cause; this is true of all sinners. God so loved man, that He gave His only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and He was not only offered on the cross, but daily offers Himself for them, giving them His blood to drink and His body for their food, and bestowing upon them every moment innumerable blessings for body and soul. If notwithstanding all this they yet commit sin, is it not hating God without cause?

SUPPLICATION. We earnestly beseech Thee, O most loving Jesus, to inflame our cold hearts with the heavenly fire of love, so that we may love our neighbor as ourselves according to Thy example and precept, and never be beguiled by envy or hatred from this love, always remembering that we, Thy poor



servants, are not greater than Thou, our Lord and God, and, therefore, should not complain if, like Thee, we are hated and persecuted by the world. Strengthen us by Thy grace, that we may patiently endure all things which Thy divine will sends to us, that we may live and die, after Thy example, in the love of God and our neighbor. Amen.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ALL SAINTS.

[November 1.]



*Why has the Church instituted this festival?*

O give praise to God in His saints, (*Ps. cl.*) and to pay to the saints themselves the honor which they merit for having made it the work of their earthly life to promote the honor of God. 2. To impress vividly upon our minds that we are members of that holy Catholic Church which believes in the communion of saints, that is, in the communion of all true Christians, who belong to the Church triumphant in heaven, to the Church suffering in purgatory, or to the Church militant upon earth; but, more particularly, to cause us earnestly to consider the communion of the saints in heaven with us, who are yet battling on earth. 3. To exhort us to raise our eyes and hearts, especially on this day, to heaven, where before the throne of God is gathered the innumerable multitude of saints of all countries, times, nationalities and ranks of life, who have faithfully followed Christ and left us glorious examples of virtues, which we ought to imitate. This we can do, for the saints, too, were weak men, who fought and conquered only by the grace of God, which will not be denied to us. 4. To honor those saints, for whom during the year there is no special festival appointed by the Church. Finally, that in consideration of so many intercessors God may grant us perfect reconciliation, may permit us to share in their merits, and may grant us the grace to enjoy with them, one day, the bliss of heaven.



*Who first instituted this festival?*

Pope Boniface IV. first suggested the celebration of this festival, when in 610 he ordered that the Pantheon, a pagan temple at Rome, dedicated to all the gods, should be converted into a Christian church, and the relics of the saints, dispersed through the different Roman cemeteries, taken up and placed therein. He then dedicated the Church to the honor of the Blessed Virgin and all the martyrs, and thus for the first time celebrated the Festival of All Saints, directing that it should be observed in Rome every year. Pope Gregory IV. extended this feast to the whole Catholic Church, and appointed the 1st of November as the day of its celebration.

At the Introit the Church sings: Let us all rejoice in the Lord, celebrating a festival day in honor of all the saints; at whose solemnity the angels rejoice, and give praise to the Son of God. Rejoice in the Lord, ye just: praise becometh the upright. Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Almighty everlasting God, who givest us to venerate in one solemnity the merits of all Thy saints: we beseech Thee to bestow upon us, through our multiplied intercessors, the fulness of Thy propitiation. Thro'. &c.

LESSON. (*Apoc.* vii. 2—12.) IN THOSE DAYS, behold, I, John, saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the sign of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying: Hurt not the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, till we sign the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them that were signed, an hundred and forty-four thousand were signed, of every tribe of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Juda were twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Ruben twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Aser twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Nephtali twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Manasses twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand



signed. Of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Zabulon twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand signed. After this I saw a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and in sight of the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands: and they cried with a loud voice, saying: Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and the ancients, and the four living creatures; and they fell down before the throne upon their faces, and adored God, saying: Amen. Benediction, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, honor, and power, and strength to our God for ever and ever. Amen.

EXPLANATION. The words of this lesson relate immediately to the divine punishment on Jerusalem and the Jewish people, as they were revealed in spirit to John; in a higher and particular sense they refer to the general judgment. At this judgment there will be chosen ones, from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. But that it might not be thought that the elect are principally Christian converts from Judaism, St. John was shown a countless multitude of Christians from heathen lands, by which it is seen, that it is the pagans who will principally fill the Church of Christ and heaven. This multitude clothed in white and carrying palms in their hands, stand before the throne of God and before the Lamb, that is, Christ. The white robes are tokens of their innocence; the palm is the emblem of their glory and of their victory over the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil. They shall adore God, and forever sing to Him, in communion with all the heavenly spirits, a canticle of praise for the power and glory which He has bestowed upon them.

Let us strive so to live, that we may one day be among these chosen ones.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* v. 1—12.) AT THAT TIME, Jesus seeing the multitudes, went up into a mountain. And when he was sat down, his disciples came unto him. And





opening his mouth, he taught them, saying: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall have their fill. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they that suffer perse-



cution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when they shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you untruly, for my sake: be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven.

*Why is the Gospel of the Eight Beatitudes read on this day?*

Because they form, so to speak, the steps on which the saints courageously ascended to heaven.

If you desire to be with the saints in heaven, you must also mount patiently and perseveringly these steps, then God's hand will assuredly aid you.

## EXPLANATION OF THE EIGHT BEATITUDES.

*I. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

**T**HEY are poor in spirit who, like the apostles, leave all temporal things for Christ's sake and become poor; they who have lost their property by misfortune or injustice, and bear this loss with patience and resignation to the will of God; they who are contented with their poor and lowly station in life, do not strive for greater fortune or a higher position, and would rather suffer want than make themselves rich by unlawful means; they who though rich do not love wealth, nor set their hearts upon it, but use their riches to aid the poor; and especially they who are humble, that is, who have no exalted opinion of themselves, but are convinced of their weakness and inward poverty, have a low estimate of themselves, therefore, feel always their need, and like poor mendicants, continually implore God's grace and assistance.

*II. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.*

He is meek who represses every rising impulse of anger, impatience and desire of revenge, and willingly puts up with every thing that God, to prove him, decrees or permits to happen to him, or men inflict upon him. He who thus controls himself, is like a calm and tranquil sea, in which the image of the divine Sun is ever reflected, clear and unruffled. He who thus conquers himself is mightier than if he besieged and conquered strongly fortified cities, (*Prov.* xvi. 32.) and will without doubt receive this earth, as well as heaven, as an inheritance, enjoying eternally there the peace (*Ps.* xxxvi. 11.) which is already his on earth.



*III. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

The mourners here mentioned are not those who weep and lament over the death of relatives and friends, or over misfortune or loss of temporal riches, but those who mourn that God is so often offended, so little loved and honored by men, that so many souls, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, are lost. Among these mourners are also those who lead a strict and penitential life, and patiently endure distress; for sin is the only evil, the only thing to be lamented, and those tears only, which are shed on account of sin, are useful tears, and are recompensed by everlasting joy and eternal consolation.

*IV. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall have their fill.*

Hunger and thirst denote the ardent longing for those virtues which constitute Christian perfection. He who seeks such perfection with ardent desire and earnest striving, will be filled, that is, will be adorned by God with the most beautiful virtues, and will be abundantly rewarded in heaven.

*V. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.*

They are merciful who assist the poor according to their means, who practice every possible spiritual and corporal work of mercy, who as far as they can, patiently endure the faults of others, strive always to excuse them, and willingly forgive the injuries they have received. They especially are truly merciful, who are merciful to their enemies, and do good to them, as written: Love your enemies, and do good to them that hate you. (*Matt. v. 44.*) Well is it for him who is merciful, the greatest rewards are promised him, but a judgment without mercy shall be passed on the unmerciful.

*VI. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God.*

They are clean of heart, who carefully preserve the innocence which they received in baptism, and keep their heart and conscience free not only from all sinful words and deeds, but from all sinful thoughts and desires, and in all their omissions and commissions think and desire only good. These while yet on earth see God in all His works and creatures, because their thoughts are directed always to the Highest Good, and in the other world they will see Him face to face, enjoying in this contemplation a peculiar pleasure which is reserved for pure souls only; for as the



eye that would see well, must be clear, so must those souls be immaculate who are to see God.

*VII. Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God.*

Those are peace-makers who guard their improper desires, who are careful to have peace in their conscience and regulated tranquility in all their actions, who do not quarrel with their neighbors, and are submissive to the will of God. These are called children of God, because they follow God who is a God of peace, (*Rom. xv. 33.*) and who even gave His only Son to reconcile the world, and bring upon earth that peace which the world does not know and cannot give. (*Luke ii. 14.; John xiv. 27.*)

*VIII. Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Those suffer persecution for justice' sake who by their words, writings, or by their life defend the truth, the faith and Christian virtues; who cling firmly to God, and permit nothing to turn them from the duties of the Christian profession, from the practice of their holy religion, but on its account suffer hatred, contempt, disgrace, injury and injustice from the world. If they endure all this with patience and perseverance, even, like the saints, with joy, then they will become like the saints and like them receive the heavenly crown. If we wish to be crowned with them, we must suffer with them: And all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. (*ii. Tim. iii. 12.*)

SUPPLICATION. How lovely, O Lord, are Thy tabernacles! My soul longeth for Thy courts. My body and soul rejoice in Thee, most loving God, Thou crown and reward of all the saints, whose temporal pains and sufferings Thou dost reward with eternal joy, filling them with good! How blessed are they who have faithfully served Thee, for they carry Thy name on their forehead, and reign with Thee for all eternity. Grant us, we beseech Thee, O God, by their intercession, Thy grace that we, after their example, may serve Thee in sanctity and justice, in poverty and humility, in meekness and repentance, in the ardent



desire for all virtues, by mercy, perfect purity of heart, in peacefulness and patience, following them, and taking part, one day, with them in heavenly joy and happiness. Amen.

*[See the Instruction on the Veneration of Saints at the beginning of the second part of this book.]*

## INSTRUCTION ON ALL SOULS' DAY.

*[November 2.]*



### *What is All Souls' Day?*

It is the day set apart by the Catholic Church for the special devout commemoration of all those souls who have departed this life in the grace and friendship of God, for whom we pray, that they may soon be released by God from the prison of purgatory.

### *What is purgatory?*

Purgatory is a middle state of souls; suffering for a time on account of their sins. St. Paul writes to the Corinthians: And the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. If any man's work abide, which he hath built there upon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work burn, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire. (i. Cor. iii. 13—15.) "And when St. Paul," says St. Ambrose (*Serm. 20. in Ps. cxviii.*) "says, yet so as by fire, he shows that such a man indeed becomes happy, having suffered the punishment of fire, but not, like the wicked, continually tormented in eternal fire." St. Paul's words, then, can only be understood to refer to the fire of purification, as the infallible Church has always explained them.

*Are the heretics right in denying that there is such a place of purification as purgatory?*

By no means, for by such denial they oppose the holy Scriptures, tradition and reason. The holy Scriptures teach that there is a purgatory: it is related in the Second Book of Machabees, that Judas Machabeus sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem, to be used in the temple,



to obtain prayers for those who fell in battle, for he believed it a good and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins. But for what dead shall we pray? Those in heaven do not require our prayers; to those in hell they are of no avail; we must then pray for those who are in the place of purification. Christ speaks of a prison in the future life, from which no man comes out until he has paid the last farthing. (*Matt.* v. 25, 26.) This prison cannot be hell, because from hell there is never any release; it must be then a place of purification. Again Christ speaks of sin which shall be forgiven neither in this world nor in the next, (*Matt.* xii. 32.) from which it follows that there is a remittance of some sins in the next world; but this can be neither in heaven nor in hell, consequently in purgatory. As the council of Trent says, (*Sess.* 6. c. 30.) the Church has always taught, according to the old tradition of the Fathers, in all her councils, that there is a purgatory, and every century gives proofs of the continual belief of all true Christians in a purgatory. Finally, man's unblinded reason must accept a purgatory; for how many depart this earth before having accomplished the great work of their own purification? They cannot enter heaven, for St. John tells us: There shall not enter into it any thing defiled. (*Apoc.* xxi. 27.) The simple separation of the soul from the body does not make it pure, yet God cannot reject it as He does the soul of the hardened sinner in hell; there must then be a middle place, a purgatory, where those who have departed not free from stain, must be purified. See how the doctrine of the Church, reason and the holy Scriptures all agree, and do not let yourself be led away by false arguments from those who not only believe in no purgatory, but even in no hell, so that they may sin with so much more impunity.

*For what, how much, and for how long must we suffer in purgatory?*

Concerning this the Church has made no decision, though much has been written by the Fathers of the Church on the subject. Concerning the severity of the punishment in purgatory, St. Augustine writes: "This fire is more painful than any that man can suffer in this life." This should urge us to continual sanctification and atonement, so that we may escape the fearful judgment of God.

*How can we aid the suffering souls in purgatory?*

St. Augustine writes: "It is not to be doubted that we can aid the souls of the departed by the prayers of the



Church, by the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and by the alms which we offer for them." The Church has always taught that prayers for the faithful departed are useful and good, and she has always offered Masses for them.

*What should urge us to aid the suffering souls in purgatory?*

1. The consideration of the belief of the Church in the communion of saints, by which all the members of the Church upon earth, in heaven, and in purgatory are united by the bonds of love, like the members of one body, and as the healthy members of a body sympathize with the suffering members, seeking to aid them, so should we assist our suffering brethren in purgatory. 2. The remembrance that it is God's will that we should practice charity towards one another, and that fearful judgments are threatened those who show no charity to a brother in need, together with the recollection of God's love which desires that all men should be happy in heaven. 3. We should be urged to it by love for ourselves, for if we should be condemned to the pains of purification, we would assuredly desire our living brethren to pray for us and perform good works for our sake, while the souls who have found redemption, perhaps through our prayers, will not fail to reward us by interceding for us.

*Can we aid the souls in purgatory by gaining indulgences?*

Yes, for indulgences, (as explained in the Instruction on the eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost,) are a complete or a partial remittance of the temporal punishment due to sin, bestowed by the Church to penitent sinners from the treasury of the merits of Christ and His saints. If we gain such a remittance, we can apply it to the souls in purgatory. Such an indulgence, however, can be transferred only to one soul.

*For which souls should we pray?*

We should, on this day especially, offer prayers and good works for all the faithful departed, but particularly for our parents, relations, friends and benefactors; for those who are most acceptable to God; for those who have suffered the longest, or who have the longest yet to suffer; for those who are most painfully tormented; for those who are the most forsaken; for those who are nearest redemption; for those who are suffering on our account; for those who hope in our prayers; for those who during life have injured us, or been injured by us; and for our spiritual brethren.



*When and by what means was this yearly commemoration of the departed introduced into the Church?*

The precise time of its introduction is not known. Tertullian (A. D. 160) writes that the early Christians held a yearly commemoration of the faithful departed. Towards the end of the 10th century St. Odilo, Abbot of the Benedictines at Cluny, directed that the yearly commemoration of the faithful departed should be observed on the 2nd of November with prayers, alms and the Sacrifice of the Mass, which time and manner of celebration spread through various dioceses, and was officially confirmed by Pope John XIX. This day was appointed that, having the day previously rejoiced at the glory of the saints in heaven, we might on this day most properly pray for those who are yet doing penance for their sins and sigh in purgatory for their redemption.

The Introit of this day's Mass as of all Masses for the dead reads: Eternal rest give to them, O Lord: and let perpetual light shine upon them. A hymn, O God, becometh Thee in Sion; and a vow shall be paid to Thee in Jerusalem: hear my prayer; all flesh shall come to Thee. Eternal rest give to them, O Lord: and let perpetual light shine upon them.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, grant to the souls of Thy servants departed the remission of all their sins: that through pious supplications they may obtain the pardon which they have always desired. Who livest &c.

EPISTLE. (i. Cor. xv. 51—57.) BRETHREN, behold, I tell you a mystery: we shall all indeed rise again, but we shall not all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall rise again incorruptible: and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. And when this mortal hath put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? Now



the sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

GOSPEL. (*John* v. 25—29.) At that time, Jesus said to the multitudes of the Jews: Amen, amen, I say unto you, that the hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself, so he hath given to the Son also to have life in himself: and he hath given him power to do judgment, because he is the Son of man. Wonder not at this, for the hour cometh wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that have done good things shall come forth unto the resurrection of life: but they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment.

The Epistle and Gospel of this day speak of the resurrection of all men and of the judgment, when every one according as he has lived, sinful and impenitent, or pure and innocent, will receive an eternally miserable or an eternally happy life. Purgatory will then end and there will be only heaven and hell. It remains with us to choose which of these two we shall possess.

*At the Offertory of the Mass the priest prays:*

O Lord Jesus Christ, King of Glory, deliver the souls of all the faithful departed from the pains of hell and from the deep pit: deliver them from the mouth of the lion, that hell may not swallow them up, and they may not fall into darkness: but may the holy standard-bearer, Michael, introduce them to the holy light: which Thou didst promise of old to Abraham and to his seed. We offer to Thee, O Lord, sacrifices and prayers: do Thou receive them in behalf of those souls whom we commemorate this day. Grant them, O Lord, to pass from death to that life which Thou didst promise of old to Abraham and to his seed.

*We may profitably and devoutly repeat the following as often as we pass a graveyard.*

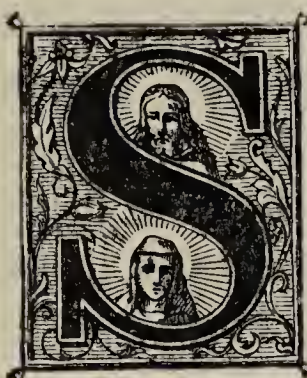
V. From the gates of hell,  
R. Deliver their souls, O Lord.



V Eternal rest give to them, O Lord,  
 R. And let perpetual light shine upon them.  
 V May they rest in peace,  
 R. Amen.  
 V May the souls of all the faithful departed through  
 the mercy of God rest in peace,  
 R. Amen.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. MALACHY.

[*November 3.*]



T. MALACHY was born in Armagh in 1094. His parents were persons of distinction and very virtuous, especially his mother, who was the most solicitous to bring him up in the fear of God. She destined him from his early youth for the Church, and never ceased to instill into his tender mind the most perfect sentiments and maxims of piety. He was meek, humble, obedient, modest, obliging to all, and very diligent in his studies; he was temperate in his diet, slept little, and had no inclination to sports and diversions, so that he far outstripped his fellow students in learning, and his masters in virtue. To learn better the art of dying to himself and living wholly to God, Malachy put himself under the discipline of a holy recluse, named Imar, who led a most austere life. This step in one of his age, rank, talents and acquirements, astonished all who knew him, they not being able to bear the thought that one of so delicate a constitution and such fine accomplishments should embrace a state of such rigor, and in their eyes so mean and contemptible. The saint valued not their censures, and learned by despising them to vanquish both the world and himself. To attain the true love of God, he condemned himself whilst alive, as it were, to the grave. He was subject to his superiors and instructors, in obedience to the words of the prophet: "It is good for a man, when he hath borne the yoke from his youth." Imar, his superior, and Celsus, archbishop of Armagh, obliged him to receive holy orders, and later consecrated him bishop. Archbishop Celsus appointed Malachy his vicar, entrusted him with the charge of correcting various abuses that had crept into the Church. Wonderful was the zeal with which Malachy discharged this



commission; abuses and vices were corrected, barbarous customs were abolished and diabolical charms and superstition banished. St. Malachy was called in 1120 to rebuild and preside over the ancient monastery of Bangor; whilst occupying this position he led the way in all spiritual performances, and restored the pious practices of the original Cenobites of Bangor, and as St. Bernard says, was a living rule, a bright mirror, or, as it were, a book laid open in which all might learn the true precepts of religious life. Celsus on his death-bed appointed Malachy his successor. He did not assume his charge for three years on account of one Maritius who opposed him. After nine years of zealous labor our saint made a pilgrimage to Rome to receive the pallium. He visited on his way the renowned abbey of Clairvaux, where he would have liked to end his days in peace; on his return from Rome he revisited it, and left four of his companions there to make their vows, and afterwards they founded the Cistercian monastery of Mellifont.

In 1148 he again visited France to consult with Pope Eugene III., but he did not reach him alive. In October he arrived at Clairvaux and was seized with a violent fever. He foretold the day of his death which occurred on the 2nd of November 1148. Abbots carried him to the grave. A youth with a paralyzed arm was instantly cured by touching his holy corpse. Innumerable miracles were wrought at the grave of this singularly great man.

*For the Introit of the Mass, Epistle and Gospel see feast of St. Patrick, March 17th.*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O Lord, we humbly crave Thy majesty that we may be helped through the merits of Malachy Thy confessor and bishop, by whose example we are instructed. Thro'. &c.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. MARTIN, BISHOP.

[November 11.]



**S**T. MARTIN was born in Hungary of pagan parents, but a secret instinct of his soul urged him from childhood to the acknowledgment of the only true God and to the acceptance of the Christian religion. In his tenth year he was placed among the catechumens, that is, those who were preparing to receive the holy Sacrament of Baptism. His pagan father sought to restrain him, but in vain; he had him placed in a company of soldiers, but the fear of God kept him in this position not only free from the excesses common to it, but gave him opportunities to practice the love of his neighbor by distributing his pay among the poor. Once he was met at the gate of the city of Tours by a beggar without clothes, and having nothing else to give him, Martin with his sword cut his own cloak in two, and gave half to the beggar. The following night our Lord appeared to him with that part of the cloak wrapped around him, and said: "With this mantle has Martin, the catechumen, clothed me." Moved by this consoling vision, Martin no longer delayed receiving baptism; he left the army and went to St. Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, and under his direction made wonderful progress in Christian virtue. But however much he labored for his salvation, he did not forget to strive equally for the salvation of others, especially of his parents and relations, for whose conversion he undertook a long and perilous journey back to his native country. On his return he built a monastery, in which he and a number of other monks led a very strict and virtuous life. His great faith and his ardent love made him equal to the apostles in the performance of miracles; his first was the raising to life of a catechumen who had died without baptism. The fame of his sanctity and of the miracles which he wrought, led to his election to the bishopric of Tours, in spite of his determined resistance to the acceptance of the position. This new dignity changed nothing in his manner of life, except that it increased his humility, his zeal for God's honor, and his love for his neighbor. Thus he took charge of his diocese for twenty-six years. When over eighty years old, he settled an insurrection which had broken out at Cande, but returning home



**ST. MARTIN, BISHOP.**

his strength left him; he called his disciples together, and said: "My children, I am dying!" To which they responded: "Alas, father, wilt thou leave us? To whom wilt thou leave thy orphans?" Touched by this, the saint prayed: "Lord! If I am still necessary to Thy people, I refuse not the work." But he had toiled enough, his end was approaching; when the priests surrounding him, asked him to change his position in order that he might be easier, he replied: "Let me rather look towards heaven, my brethren, than turn again



to earth, that my spirit which is already on its way to the Lord, may not be disturbed from the straight way to Him." He saw Satan near him, and said: "What dost thou here, thou wild beast? Miserable fiend, thou canst not harm me! Abraham's bosom will receive me." With these words he yielded up his spirit, which the angels, singing hymns of praise, carried to heaven.

O that we might learn from St. Martin's life to love God and to care not only for our own salvation, but also for the spiritual and corporal welfare of others, then indeed would we, at the hour of death, have nothing to fear from the temptations of the evil one.

*[The Introit is the same as on the Feast of St. Peter's Chair.]*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God who seest, that of our own strength we can do nothing, graciously grant, that by the intercession of Thy holy bishop and confessor Martin, we may be protected from all adversities. Through &c.

*[For the Lesson and Explanation see Feast of St. Patrick, March 17th.]*

GOSPEL. (*Luke xi. 33—36.* AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to his disciples: No man lighteth a candle, and putteth it in a hidden place nor under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, that they that come in may see the light. The light of thy body is thy eye. If thy eye be single, thy whole body will be lightsome: but if it be evil, thy body also will be darksome. Take heed therefore, that the light which is in thee, be not darkness. If then thy whole body be lightsome, having no part of darkness, the whole shall be lightsome, and as a bright lamp shall enlighten thee.

*What is to be understood by the light which is put on a candlestick?*

Christ Himself who by His doctrine and example, like a light in a high place, illumines all who walk in darkness, and whoever follows this light cannot go astray. It shines for every man that comes into this world, and if any one does not recognize it, he may attribute it to his own blindness and hardness of heart. Such lights are also teachers,



heads of families, parents, and especially the clergy, whom God has placed on a candlestick, so to speak, for the good of those under them. Such persons must earnestly strive to shine for the good of those placed under their care, by giving good instruction, but still more by the example of a pious and edifying life, and not to mislead them, like an ignis fatuus, by scandalous words and actions, into evil. Every Christian should shine for his fellow-men by good works, that is, he should guide, exhort and warn them to the right by good example, and not lead them in wrong paths by an indolent, unchristian and sinful life. Finally, this light represents our conscience, the light which God has signed upon us, (*Ps. iv. 7.*) and is kindled within us, that it may shine to us in all our actions and make clear what is right and just. We must strive to keep this light ever on its candlestick, that is, be always guided by it, and never darken or extinguish it by sin.

*What are we to understand by the eye and the body?*

By the eye is understood our good intention, or the feelings of the heart directed always to God and His honor, and by the body the works and actions of our life. The simile, therefore, means: As a clear, healthy eye controls the body and directs its course, so the mind, turned towards God, guides our conduct and renders it acceptable to God. Be careful, therefore, to have always a single eye, that is, a sincere intention, turned to God's honor, in your thoughts and actions, and not an evil eye, that is, a mind set only upon this world, its vanities and false pleasures.

PRAYER TO ST. MARTIN. O blessed St. Martin, so zealous for God's honor, that neither in word nor deed wouldst thou permit thyself to be overcome, whereat the angels so rejoiced, that they carried thy soul with hymns of praise to the throne of God, I implore thee to obtain for me by thy powerful intercession a compassionate heart for all sufferers, obtain true apostolic zeal for all pastors, and for all on their death-bed the grace to enter like thee from this miserable life into the joy of the Lord, which thou, as a good and faithful servant, dost already possess. Through &c.





## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. LAURENCE O'TOOLE.

[November 14.]



LAURENCE was the youngest son of Maurice O'Toole, a rich and powerful prince in Leinster. When but ten years old his father delivered him up a hostage to Dermot Mac Murchad, king of Leinster, who kept the child in a desert place, where he was treated with great cruelty, till his father being informed that by such treatment his son had fallen into a bad state of health, obliged the tyrant to place him under the care of the pious bishop of Glendaloch, by whom he was carefully instructed in the service of God, and at twelve years of age sent back to his father. Maurice took Laurence with him, and went to thank the good bishop, at the same time mentioning to him his design of casting lots to ascertain which of his four sons he should destine for the service of the Church. Laurence being justly startled at such a superstitious project, cried out with great earnestness: "There is no need of casting lots. It is my most ardent desire to have for my inheritance no other portion than God in the service of the Church." Hereupon the father, taking him by the hand, offered him to God and delivered him to the bishop. Laurence made, under the care of his bishop, great progress in all virtues especially in the virtue of humility.

After the death of the bishop of Glendaloch, who was at the same time abbot of the great monastery there, Laurence, though only twenty-five years of age, was chosen abbot, and only shunned the episcopal dignity by alleging that the canons require in a bishop thirty years of age. Our saint governed his numerous community with admirable virtue and prudence, and in a great famine, like another Joseph, proved a saviour of his country by his boundless charity.

When Gregory the archbishop of Dublin died, about the time that our saint was thirty years of age, Laurence was unanimously chosen to fill that metropolitan see, and was consecrated by Gelasius the successor of St. Malachy. When archbishop, his first care was to reform the manners of his clergy, and to furnish the Church with worthy ministers.

His exhortations to others were most powerful, because they were supported by the admirable example of his own



life. About the year 1163, he engaged the secular canons of his cathedral to receive the rule of the regular canons of Arouasia, an Abbey in the diocese of Arras. Our saint himself took the habit, which he always wore under his pontifical attire. He ate with the religious in the refectory, observed their hours of silence, and always assisted with them at the midnight office; after which he continued a long time in the church in private prayer before a crucifix, and towards break of day went to the burial-place to pray for the souls of the faithful departed. He never ate flesh, and fasted Fridays on bread and water, and oftentimes without taking anything at all. He wore a rough hair shirt, and frequently used the discipline. Every day he entertained at table thirty poor persons, and often many more, besides great numbers which he maintained in private houses. To watch over and examine into his own heart and conduct, and to renew his interior spirit, he frequently retired for some days into the monastery of Glendaloch; but usually he hid himself in a solitary cave at some distance from the monastery, between a rock and a deep lake, in which St. Coëmgen, who was the patron saint of this monastery, had lived.

The greater part of his people were blinded by the love of the world, and enslaved to their passions in such a manner that the zealous pains he took seemed lost upon them; because they listened not to his reproaching words and his entreaties, he foretold the severe punishments of divine justice. Soon a war was brought upon them by Dermot Mac Murchad, king of Leinster, on account of a crime he had committed. During this war Dermot died, but the earl of Pembroke, being left his heir, claimed the principality of Leinster, because his wife was Dermot's daughter, took Dublin, and massacred a great number of the inhabitants. These miseries served to purify the elect, and doubtless brought many who before had been deaf to the saint's remonstrances, to a sense of their spiritual miseries. St. Laurence was afterwards obliged, regarding the affairs of his Church, to go over to England in order to make application to king Henry II. who was at the time at Canterbury. On the day following when at the altar to say Mass, a madman who had heard much of his sanctity, through an extravagant notion of making so holy a man a martyr, gave him a violent blow on the head; the saint fell insensible, and although all present concluded that he was mortally wounded, yet coming to himself he called for water, which he blessed with the sign of the cross, and then directed the wound to be washed with it. This being done the



blood was immediately stopped, and the saint continued the Mass. His biographer was an eye-witness to this miracle, and he states that the fracture was to be seen in the saint's skull after his death.

In the year 1179 St. Laurence assisted at the third general council of the Lateran. On that occasion he laid before his holiness, Pope Alexander, the state of the Irish Church, and begged that effectual remedies might be applied to many disorders which reigned in that country, and care taken for preserving the liberties of the Church. The Pope was greatly pleased with his wise and zealous proposals, and so satisfied of his virtue and prudence, that he readily made the regulations which the saint desired and appointed him legate of the Holy See in the kingdom of Ireland. On his return to Ireland he found the whole country afflicted with a terrible famine, which raged three years. During it the saint fed every day fifty strangers, and three hundred poor persons of his own diocese, besides many others whom he furnished with clothes, victuals, and the other necessities of life. Mothers who were reduced so low as not to be able to keep their children, laid them at the door of the bishop, or where he would see them, and the saint took care of them all, sometimes providing for three hundred of them together. Having settled the enmity existing between Henry II. of England and Roderic, the Irish monarch, he was seized on his road home by a fever, which obliged him to take up quarters in the monastery of regular canons at Eu, upon the confines of Normandy. Going into this house he recited that verse of the psalmist: "This is my resting-place forever: in this place will I dwell because I have chosen it." The abbot heard his confession, gave him the Viaticum and Extreme Unction. To one who put him in mind to make his will, he answered with a smile: "Of what do you speak? I thank God I have not a penny left in the world to dispose of." He had given all to the poor. The saint died happily on the 14th. of November, 1180, and was buried in the church of the abbey. Many miracles were wrought by him. The bull of his canonization as published by Honorius III. in 1226 mentions that even dead persons had been raised to life by him.

*[For the Introit of the Mass, Epistle and Gospel see feast of St. Patrick, March 17th.]*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O, Lord who hast decorated blessed Laurence Thy confessor and bishop with innumerable miracles: grant, that by his merits



and intercession we may obtain the health of our body and the salvation of our soul. Thro'. &c.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. GERTRUDE, THE GREAT, VIRGIN AND ABBESS.

[*November 15.*]



HIS seraphic saint was born of an illustrious family at Eisleben, in Upper Saxony, on the 6th of January, about the year 1221; and thus a star of no ordinary brilliancy was given to the Church on the day on which that Church was mystically led by a star to her Incarnate God. At the age of five years, she was offered to God in the Benedictine nunnery of Rodalsdorf. Burning with love to devote herself entirely to the service of God she made her vows. On account of her rapid advancement in the way of perfection she was chosen abbess in 1251. In the following year she went with her sisters to Helfde where she remained until her death. From her childhood she possessed a thorough knowledge of the Latin language, which she used with great advantage, and which shone particularly in her clear insight into the holy Scriptures in which she was well versed. Ecstasies and raptures of divine love and the gifts of divine union in prayer became to her as second nature; she seemed to be more in heaven than on earth. Our Lord once revealed the following to a holy person: "You cannot find Me in any place in which I delight more, or which is more suitable for me, than in the Sacrament of the Altar and after that, in the heart and soul of Gertrude, My beloved; for towards her all My affections and the complacencies of My Divine love turn in a special manner." She showed her great love for Jesus, especially, by the great humility which she manifested in the care of the sick, performing for them the most repulsive offices.

Gertrude made sublime advances in the union of her heart with God, and to remove all obstacles to this union she labored to purify her affections by tears of compunction, by the renunciation of sensual delights, and the most perfect denial of herself. By command of God she wrote the divine revelations with which she was favored and left them as



a precious treasure to the Church, and to those desirous of walking in the path of perfection that leads to eternal life. Having governed her monastery for forty years, she was called to the embraces of her heavenly Spouse in 1291.

The last sickness of St. Gertrude seemed rather a languishing of Divine love than a natural fever; so abundantly did her soul enjoy in it the sweetest comforts and presence of the Holy Ghost. Miracles attested how precious her death was in the sight of God.

Introit of the Mass: Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the King. (Ps. xliv.) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who didst prepare an agreeable abode for Thyself in the most pure heart of blessed Gertrude, Thy virgin, graciously cleanse our hearts, we beseech Thee, through her merits and intercession from all stains, and grant that we may enjoy the same happiness with her. Thro'. &c.

*[Epistle and Gospel see Feast of St. Bridget, February 1st.]*

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF MARY.

*[November 21.]*



*What festival is this?*

It is a festival set apart by the Church for the commemoration of the day on which the Blessed Virgin Mary was offered by her pious parents to the Lord in the temple, and on which Mary consecrated herself forever to God's service.

*How did this take place?*

The parents of the Blessed Virgin had promised, as we learn by tradition, to offer the child which God was to give them, to His service in the temple. Mary also, in her most tender age, enlightened by divine inspiration had offered herself wholly to the Lord, consecrating herself un-



reservedly to His love and service. She knew also that her parents had made a vow to dedicate her to the service of God, for it was an old custom with the Jews to place their daughters in one of the rooms surrounding the temple, there to be educated by saintly women, as now did Joachim and Anne their holy child. Mary, though only three years of age, knew of her parents' vow, she, therefore, intended to dedicate herself solemnly to God in the temple; hence, she entreated her parents to fulfil their promise to God, after which, as St. Gregory of Nyssa tells us, St. Anne no longer delayed accompanying her to the temple and offering her to God. Mary, like a graceful dove, hastened in advance on the wings of desire; simple and without external show was her entrance into the temple, but innumerable heavenly spirits celebrated this festival, and the Most High looked down with pleasure upon this purest and holiest sacrifice ever offered in His temple. The three holy persons fell on their faces and adored the living God; the parents in deepest humility, adoration and reverence offered Him their daughter and Mary gave thanks to the God of Israel, that He had given her the grace to serve Him, and to give herself to Him to be His handmaid forever. Then Joachim and Anne gave their beloved child to the priest Zacharias (*S. Germ. Greg. de Nicom.*) who presided at the holy service, who, having offered prayers and sacrifices for her, led her to that part of the temple where the maidens dedicated to God's service were educated. Here Mary shone as a model for all who were with her, and she shines still for all who, like her, consecrate their virginity to the Lord, and devote themselves wholly and entirely to His service.

*[The Introit, Epistle and Gospel is the same as on the Festival of the Rosary.]*

INSTRUCTION. I. Wonderful was the generosity of these parents who through love of God deprived themselves of their only and well beloved child, offering her to the Most High and devoting her to His service in the temple. True love of God is ever ready to make any sacrifice that may be required.

Parents! God does not require from all of you, that you, like Joachim and Anne, should dedicate your children in a special manner to Him, but He does require of you all, that you see in your children the temple of the Holy Ghost, and that you should guard them from every stain of sin. From their earliest youth you should, if you wish for joy in your children, train them for God's service, changing your dwelling into God's temple by a Christian life.



II. Mary even in her tenderest childhood, offers and consecrates herself; she gives herself unreservedly and irrevocably to God. When shall we give ourselves in earnest to Him? We were offered to Him in baptism, it is true, and made His consecrated temple; we then renounced the world and the devil; we then bound ourselves to live for God only, and we have, since then, renewed our baptismal covenant with Him. But have we kept it? Have we not with one hand stolen that which with the other we offered to God? Have we not profaned with shameful desires the temple of our heart? Have we not lived more for ourselves, for the world, for vanity, than for God? When will we truly give ourselves to God? In our old age perhaps? But will God, after we have spent our youth and strength in the service of the world, accept the offering of our weak, feeble body, of our soul fettered by the chains of sin? Will He be satisfied with our service when we can no longer serve the world? when we commence to live for God only when we commence to die? God is a jealous God, He is not satisfied with a divided heart. He wishes to be loved with the whole heart, with the whole soul, and with all one's strength. And thus He deserves to be loved; it is only such perfect love as this that He can reward, for He wishes to give Himself entirely to us, as we give ourselves entirely to Him, without reserve, for Christ says: If any one love me, my father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him. (*John xiv. 23.*)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, of whose will the blessed Mary ever virgin being herself the dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit, was this day presented in the temple: grant, we beseech Thee, that, through her intercession, we may be found worthy to be presented in the temple of Thy glory. Thro'. &c.

PRAYER TO MARY. O Mary, most pleasing offering in the sight of God, prepare my heart to be a worthy and acceptable offering to God. Obtain for me, that from henceforth there may be no thought in my heart, no word of my mouth, no action of mine, which may not tend to my neighbor's good; that my heart may be at all times turned towards God, and that I may do nothing negligently that con-



cerns God's honor and my own salvation. Take from me my own perverted will, and obtain for me a will like thine, that I may satisfactorily perform all my duties, and in everything be obedient to the commands of God. Amen.

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. COLUMBAN, ABBOT.

*[November 24.]*



COLUMBAN was born of pious parents, in the province of Leinster, about the middle of the VI Century. The care of his early education was confided to a venerable and holy man, named Senile. He became a monk in the monastery of Bangor under the care of the great St. Comgal, and afterwards left Bangor accompanied by twelve other monks, crossed Great Britain, and came into Gaul.

The Catholic faith was in existence in Gaul, but it had made very little progress. The barbarity of paganism was crushing out the mild doctrines of the Christian religion, and even those who had embraced it were fast relapsing into infidelity and paganism. Here, therefore, our saint found a great field — a field where millions of souls were to be saved from perdition. He traveled through Gaul for some time, preaching to the people, and exhorting believers to abandon their evil ways and return to Christ; and unbelievers to forsake their vices and their gods. His earnestness, his eloquence, and above all the humility and purity of his life, soon made a great impression on the people. Columban preached before the king Gontran, grandson of Clovis, and his eloquence so delighted and impressed the king and his court that he urged him to remain in his country, and not to dream of converting other nations until he had secured the salvation of the Franks and Burgundians. Columban remained and took the Roman castle or fort of Annegray as a residence for his community. There he and his disciples led a most simple and austere life. In a short time his disciples became so numerous that he was forced to build a second monastery called Luxeuil, eight miles from the former. This became the chief house of his order. A



third house he built about three miles from Luxeuil which was called Fontaine on account of the many springs in that vicinity. He gave to his disciples a rule which inculcates obedience, poverty, disinterestedness, humility, chastity, mortification of the external and internal senses, of the will, in doing nothing according to self-will; silence and prudence to discern between good and evil. Each of these he enforced and grounded upon some text of Scripture or principle of morality.

Theodoric, the king of Burgundy, had a great respect for our saint who lived in his dominions; and he often visited him. The saint reproved him for keeping concubines instead of marrying a queen, and the king promised to reform his life. Brunehault, the grandmother of Theodoric, had made herself the guardian of the young king, and in fact ruled the kingdom. Fearing lest a queen should ruin her credit with her grandson, she was much provoked against the holy man. Her resentment was still more increased by his refusing to bless, at her desire, the king's four illegitimate children, saying: "They shall not inherit the kingdom; they are the fruit of debauchery." The king at the same time did not fulfil his promise to the saint concerning the dismissal of his concubines, wherefore, Columban wrote him a severe letter and threatened to excommunicate him if he did not alter his course of life. Brunehault became enraged and stirred up the king against the saint. The unfortunate Theodoric was weak enough to banish him to Besancon, and afterwards ordered two noblemen to conduct him to Nantes, and there see him shipped off to Ireland, in 610. He put to sea, but the vessel being driven back by contrary winds, he went to Clotaire II., who then was king of Neustria. To him he foretold that the whole French monarchy would come into his power in less than three years. We find our saint afterwards in Zurich. In a solitude near Zug he took up his dwelling. The inhabitants were cruel and impious idolaters. He soon succeeded in converting many, and others who had apostatized he brought back to the obedience of the gospel. St. Gall, who had accompanied Columban from Ireland set fire to the pagan temples; this so enraged some of the heathens that they resolved to murder St. Gall, and to scourge St. Columban and drive him from their country. When the holy man heard of it he retired to Arbone, upon lake Constance. In Bregenz he found an oratory near which he built cells for him and his companions. Here he remained nearly three years.

When Theodoric, now his enemy, had become master of the country in which he lived, he went with many of his dis-



ciples into Italy. Under the protection of Agilulph, king of the Lombards he erected the great monastery of Bobio. He also built an oratory in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary. St. Columban lived to govern his new monastery of Bobio only about one year, and died on the 21st of November, 615, about seventy-two years of age. His virtues and apostolic labors has rendered his name sacred to the inhabitants of Northern Italy, and in his honor one of their most beautiful towns is named San Columbano. "Wonderful," says a writer, "was the sanctity of Columban. Taught by the Holy Spirit, he established the monastic rule, and was the first who gave it to the Gauls. On earth he was distinguished for the miracles which God wrought through him; and the virtues of his works shone forth as brightly as the stars of the firmament."

The 24th day of November is still observed in Ireland as this great Saint's festival, and with particular solemnity in the diocese of Dublin.

*[The Introit is the same as on the Feast of St. Anthony, Jan. 17th.]*

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.** Let the intercession of the blessed abbot Columban, we beseech Thee, O Lord, commend us unto Thee: that what by our own merits we are unworthy to receive, we may obtain by his patronage. Thro'. &c.

*[Lesson, see feast of St. Anthony, January 17th. Gospel, see feast of St. Benedict, March 21st.]*

## INSTRUCTION ON THE FEAST OF ST. CATHARINE, VIRGIN AND MARTYR.

*[November 25.]*



CATHARINE, a noble maiden of Alexandria, labored diligently and energetically, even in her childhood, to learn the Christian religion as well as worldly sciences. In this she was so successful that, in her eighteenth year she put to shame the erroneous doctrines of the greatest philosophers of Alexandria. The occasion for this was given by the Emperor Maxentius, a cruel persecutor of the Christians. When he learned that the young and beautiful Catharine upheld the





divinity of the Christian religion in the strongest manner, he ordered the wisest philosophers to meet at Alexandria, promising them great rewards, if they would refute the maiden in argument, and prevail upon her to become an idolater. But the contrary effect was produced, for Catharine proved with such powerful arguments that the Christian religion is the only true religion, the one, the only one necessary for eternal life, that the philosophers accepted it without delay, and afterwards defended it with their blood. The emperor, exasperated by this unexpected result of the debate, sought in other ways to move her, using all possible persuasions, offering himself to her in marriage, promising to make her queen of the world if she would renounce her faith; but finding all unavailing he had recourse to threats. He caused her to be tortured for eleven days in prison by blows, hunger and thirst, but with no



other success than that the empress, his wife, and General Porphyrius, who visited Catharine in prison, were converted to the faith and prepared to die as martyrs. Still more enraged by this, the emperor commanded that Catharine should be placed on a wheel of knives and sharp iron hooks, which would tear her body in pieces. But what happened? She made the sign of the cross on the wheel, and instantly the fearful instrument of torture flew apart, and an immense number of spectators were converted by the miracle. The tyrant dared not try new tortures lest still more should be converted. He, therefore, ordered that she should be beheaded. The saint received her death blow joyously, and her pure soul ascended to heaven to receive the double crown of virginity and martyrdom. Her body was buried by angels on Mount Sinai, where in the eighth century it was found by the Christians, and is still venerated with the greatest devotion.

What will those young girls think who read this biography, who instead of gaining many souls for God by piety and modesty, draw many from Him and lead them to hell by their reckless conduct, the freedom of their manners, their improper bearing, their shameful dress, and their unblushing exposure?

At the Introit the Church sings: I spoke of Thy testimonies before kings, and I was not ashamed: I meditated also on Thy commandments, which I loved exceedingly. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. (*Ps. cxviii.*) Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who gavest the law to Moses on Mount Sinai, and didst wonderfully translate the body of blessed Catharine, Thy virgin and martyr, thither by the ministry of holy angels: mercifully grant, by her merits and prayers, that we may safely come to the mount which is Christ. Who liveth &c.

LESSON. (*Ecclus. li. 1—12.*) I will give glory to thee, O Lord my king, and I will praise thee, O God my Saviour. I will give glory to thy name, for thou hast been a helper and protector to me, and hast preserved my body from destruction, from the snare of an unjust tongue, and from the lips of them



that forge lies, and in the sight of them that stood by, thou hast been my helper. And thou hast delivered me, according to the multitude of the mercy of thy name, from them that did roar, prepared to devour, out of the hands of them that sought my life, and from the gates of afflictions which compassed me about: from the oppression of the flame which surrounded me, and in the midst of the fire I was not burnt: from the depth of the belly of hell, and from an unclean tongue, and from lying words, from an unjust king, and from a slanderous tongue. My soul shall praise the Lord even to death, because thou, O Lord our God, deliverest them that wait for thee, and savest them out of the hands of the nations.

APPLICATION. The Church on this day praises God in the words of the wise man, for the graces which He bestowed on St. Catharine, but especially for the protection of her purity against the temptations and dangers of this world. God is indeed the most faithful defender and the most powerful protector of pure and unsullied souls; he does not permit those who trust in Him to be confounded. Sometimes He allows them to be assailed by great temptations, dangers and trials, but only in order to give them occasion for victory and more conspicuously to manifest His help; for in the midst of their trouble, He is with them, and the greater the danger the more wonderful is His protection. This protection can not be claimed by those who, without necessity, heedlessly expose themselves to the greatest dangers, who intentionally seek occasions for sin, and cast themselves into the fire of the greatest temptations. For such as these God surely will not renew the miracle of the children in the fiery furnace, but leave them to perish in the danger which they have loved. (*Ecclus. iii. 27.*)

*The Gospel is the same as on the Feast of St. Rose of Lima.*

*What does Christ teach us by this parable?*

He teaches us at every moment to be prepared for the judgment which will come after death, when He will take those who are ready with Him to the marriage, that is, to heaven, and will exclude those who are not prepared. Therefore He says at the end: Watch ye, therefore, because ye know not the day nor the hour.



*What is to be understood by the marriage and the persons present at it?*

The marriage is the eternal possession and enjoyment of God; the bridegroom is Jesus Christ; the bride is His Church upon earth; the marriage feast is the union of Christ and His Church in heaven; the ten virgins are all those who are invited to the marriage of the Lamb and to the eternal banquet.

*Why are the faithful compared to virgins?*

Because in the designs of God all the faithful should be as virgins, that is, they should lead pure and unsullied lives, by the proper use of their senses, by employing the powers of their soul in a right manner, and by avoiding all improper attachments to creatures, as St. Paul says: For I am jealous of you with the jealousy of God. For I have espoused you as a chaste virgin to Christ. (ii. Cor. xi. 2.)

*What do the oil, the lamps and the vessels represent?*

According to the interpretation of the holy Fathers the oil signifies love, good works and charity; the lamps signify faith; the vessels, the heart and conscience of man.

*What is meant by the tarrying of the bridegroom, the virgin's sleep, and the cry by which they were awakened?*

The tarrying of the bridegroom represents the uncertainty of the time of death and judgment; the virgin's sleep, the negligence in which Christians continue to live, without good works, until they are unexpectedly overtaken by the sleep of death, from which they are aroused and summoned to judgment by the sound of trumpets and the cry, Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment.

*Why did the foolish virgins ask the wise ones for oil?*

Because they had not provided themselves with any, or in other words, because they were content to have the lamp of faith or of virginity, and did not supply themselves with the oil of charity and good works. They will, therefore, be obliged at the judgment to seek oil, that is, a share in their merits from the prudent virgins, from those who combined faith with love, and so supplied themselves with good works. But they obtain nothing, for as St. Jerome says, at judgment the virtues of the just can not supply the deficiency of the unjust.



*Why did the prudent virgins tell the others to go to them that sell?*

In these words, says St. Bernard, a severe rebuke is contained for those hypocrites who all their lives have sought to please men and buy their praise; let them look to these after death for reward!

*Why did the bridegroom say to the foolish virgins: I know you not?*

To teach us that it is not enough in order to enter the kingdom of heaven, that we should believe, but that we must moreover, have a living faith, a faith productive of good works, causing us in all our actions to seek sincerely to promote God's honor. For, as St. Chrysostom says, even the virgins who bring no fruits of good works, will be cast away with those who are not virgins, on the judgment-day.

*Why does Christ say: Watch?*

St. Gregory says: "Were a man to know the time of his death he could give a part of his lifetime to the joys of this world, and a part to penance; but as we know not the hour, we should expect and be ready for the end of our life at any moment."

ASPIRATION. O Lord Jesus Christ, Teacher of eternal life! we thank Thee for having taught us how circumspectly, vigilantly, and with what preparation we should live and expect Thy coming. But as we cannot do this of our own strength, grant us Thy grace, that the fire of Thy love may burn day and night in our hearts, and that we may enter with Thee into the joys of the eternal marriage feast. O do not permit us, at the last judgment, to hear those terrible words from Thy lips: I know you not, but the joyous words: Come ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Grant us this grace, O Jesus our Saviour, who hast redeemed us by Thy precious blood. To Thee be honor, praise and thanks forever. Amen.

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## INSTRUCTION ON THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.



THE holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the most important part, indeed the central point of the whole service of the Catholic Church. "What the sun is to the stars," says St. Francis of Sales, "the holy Sacrifice of the Mass is to the other exercises of religion." The Catholic should, therefore, esteem this Sacrifice above all, and by devout participation in it endeavor to draw from it the greatest possible good. With this purpose he should consider: I. The necessity of the holy Sacrifice of the Mass; II. Its institution and continuance; III. Its essence and its purpose; IV. Its value and efficacy; V. Its constituent parts and ceremonies; VI. and, finally, the way in which he should attend it.

### *I. The Necessity of the Mass.*

When St. Paul says, (*Hebr.* ix. 11, 12, 15.) that Christ being come an high-priest of the good things to come, ..... by his own blood, entered once into the Holies, having obtained eternal redemption ..... for the redemption of those transgressions, he means to say, that Christ, by his sufferings on the cross of Calvary, atoned for our sins, perfectly cancelled all our debts, and fulfilled and supplied all offerings of the Old Law, which were types of His sacrifice and were to end with it. But it does not follow that there can be no other sacrifice than the sacrifice on the cross, and none other be necessary in the Christian Church which He founded; for there can be no religion without sacrifice. God is the infinite, highest Lord, and all rational creatures, the work of His hands, owe Him the greatest reverence, adoration and self-sacrifice; He is infinitely good to us, and we owe Him the greatest gratitude; He is infinite purity and holiness, we stand in His presence sinners, stained with sin. We do indeed show Him our reverence, our thanks, our sorrow by prayers and by loving, contrite hearts, but we have within us the urgent need of expressing the feelings of our heart externally also, by gifts and presents of the most precious, most valuable, and dearest of our possessions, which we offer and consecrate to God. This presentation of anything entirely dedicated to God, — usually something killed and consumed in order to show that the Lord, our God, is above us and all our goods, and is Lord of life and death — we call an offering, and such offerings are as old as the world. At all times and all places men have felt and owned that prayer alone is not sufficient, that they need, to be permitted to appear before God in their sinfulness and needs, to have a support to their prayers; and they, therefore, add an external gift, a present, to supply their own weakness and unworthiness, and we find among the rudest people sometimes bloody, sometimes unbloody offerings. Should not the Christian religion, then, bring an offering by which Christian people can show the homage due to God? But the sacrifices of the Old Law are abolished by the sacrifice of the cross, and God Himself has announced,



that the blood of slaughtered animals is not pleasing to Him, (*Hebr. x. 5—7.*) and that He will accept no other offering than a sacrifice worthy of His majesty, and that this pure sacrifice, worthy of His majesty, must in future be offered to Him in every place upon the earth. (*Mal. i. 10, 11.*) But what sacrifice worthy of God can the Christian offer, if not Christ, our Saviour and our Head, with whom God has given us everything, and made us by and in Him members of His body? And that this might be done, "Christ, at the Last Supper, declared Himself the Eternal High-priest according to the Order of Melchisedech, and offered His body in the form of bread and wine to God the Father, and under the same appearances He gave it as food to His apostles, whom He at that time constituted priests of the New Testament, commanding them and their successors in the priesthood to offer the same." (*Conc. Trid. Sess. 22. cap. 1. 2. 3.*) Thus He left to His beloved bride, the Church, in accordance with the needs of human nature, a visible sacrifice by means of which the bloody sacrifice on the cross might be always present to us, and the remembrance of His sufferings remain until the end of time.

The necessity of a permanent sacrifice, in the Christian Church, is further manifested by this: that the sacrifice of the cross, which Christ perfectly accomplished in relation to Himself, must also be accomplished in relation to us, that is, appropriated to us. To understand this we must remember that the victims in the Old Law were slaughtered, burnt, and a part eaten by the priests and the people, in order, so to speak, that by and through this offering they might become one with God. The sacrifices of the Old Testament were types of the New, and the faithful should now take part in the sacrifice of Christ, and thus pass to union with God; but this can be done only by eating of the sacrifice. As Christ who offered Himself on the cross cannot now be eaten by us, the Saviour instituted the holy Sacrifice of the New Testament, in which He gives Himself under the form of bread and wine to all His members for food, unites them with Himself and His Heavenly Father, and bestows upon them all His merits, all the fruits of His death upon the cross, the price of the blood which he shed. Thus St. Augustine writes: "One and the same sacrifice is offered on our altars and on Mount Calvary, with this difference only: on Mount Calvary it was only offered, on our altars it is offered and distributed." And St. Ambrose adds: "On the altar the offering of the cross is accomplished, for Christ there daily nourishes us with the Sacrament of His sufferings. In this way Christ by the sacrifice of the cross paid our ransom, and by the sacrifice of the altar distributes to us the fruits of that payment."

Christ is the Eternal High-priest. (*Ps. cix. 4.; Hebr. v. 10., vi. 20.*) He has commenced and accomplished His sacrifice on the cross, but has not ended it, for it is to be continued through all times as an accomplished, that is, a perfect sacrifice. Therefore Christ was the sacrifice not only while He hung upon the cross, but He remains for all times the sacrifice for this sinful world and offers it at all times as Eternal High-priest. All generations coming into the world, should have part in this sacrifice, should participate in its merits, not by faith only, but by partaking of the body and blood of Christ, the only true, perfect sacrifice.

Without the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the point of union of a common external divine service would be lacking in the Christian Church, by which the remembrance of the offering of the cross is renewed and properly venerated. At the sacrifice of the cross, there was no one present, who understood the sufferings and bloody death of Christ, to



unite with Him and to give due honor to this most holy sacrifice, but Mary, John and some pious women; the others who surrounded the cross, insulted, contemned and outraged this Offering. This sacrifice was indeed accomplished by the aid of men, but of men who aided only by their crimes. There was no one there, except Mary, who considered the cross as the altar upon which Christ offered Himself; no congregation was there to take part in the sacrifice of the altar. It became necessary, then, that this offering should at some future time receive the homage due to it, and that those for whose salvation the offering was made, should have the opportunity to unite in offering it, and thus to celebrate in common a divine service worthy of a Divine Majesty. This is done in the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, where the faithful are invited to venerate that bloody sacrifice of the cross, urged to gratitude for it, and invited to participation in it, by means of holy Communion. If this were not so, there would be no external, visible service in the Christian Church, and there could be no true divine service; that which should be divine worship would be only school lessons; the Church in which Christ ought to be solemnly adorned would be only a lecture-room; there would be no altar, no true communion between Christ and the faithful, and of the faithful among themselves; the means of participating in the fruits of the sacrifice of the cross, of offering and uniting ourselves with Christ, would be lacking. The truth of this we see from the condition of the heretics, who deny the continuance of Christ's sacrifice in His Church, the Sacrifice of the Mass. Their service is but a sermon; their churches, assembly rooms; the altar left standing is but a continual reminder of their inconsistency, because that is no altar on which there is no offering; their ministers of religion have ceased to be priests, for as we can not think of an altar without an offering, we can imagine no priest without a sacrifice.

In the holy Sacrifice of the Mass must be fulfilled all the prototypes and prophecies in regard to Christ's offering, which were ordered by God in the Old Testament, or were spoken by the inspired prophets.

A true and unquestionable prototype of the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, was the Offering of Melchisedech. This king of peace and justice, this high-priest who had neither predecessor nor successor in his priesthood, who offered bread and wine, and then administered it to Abraham and his servants (*Gen. xiv. 18.*) was a special type of Christ who offered Himself to His Heavenly Father under the form of bread and wine as the fountain of all peace and justice, and gave Himself to His apostles.

Another prototype of the Sacrifice of the Mass was in the loaves of proposition (*Lev. xxiv. 5—9.*) which were baked from fine flour, kept continually before the Lord in the sanctuary as a sacrifice, and at the end of eight days were eaten by the priests.

Another was in the offering of bread and wine, which was united with the sacrifice of slaughtered animals. Thus there was always an unbloody offering<sup>1</sup>, of bread and wine, united with a bloody offering, representing the united offering of the bloody Sacrifice of the Cross and the unbloody Sacrifice of the Mass.

To the offerings of the Old Testament belonged oil and incense. The oil referred to Christ, the Anointed One, who offers Himself in the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, being at the same time our High-priest, symbolized by the incense.

In regard to the prophecies, we have the holy Sacrifice of the Mass plainly announced by the prophet Malachias, (*Mal. i. 10, 11.*) when God turning to the Jewish people, says: I have no pleasure in you, and I will



not receive a gift of your hand. For from the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean offering: for my name is great among the Gentiles. In this prophecy is clearly announced, first, that the sacrifices in use among the Jews will cease; secondly, that in their place will be offered a clean oblation; thirdly, that it will be offered by all nations and in all places from the rising to the setting of the sun. By this oblation the sacrifice of the cross can not be meant, for this was offered only once and at only one place, at Jerusalem; nor can it mean the inward offering of love, as asserted by the heretics who reject the Mass, because the sacrifice of love is no new sacrifice, it was offered by the saints of the Old Testament also, and it is not entirely pure, for human failings were contained in it; nor yet is it the offering of prayer and praise, for this prophecy does not speak of a sacrifice of sweet odor by which the offering of prayer and praise might well be understood, but of an external, material thing, an oblation; consequently we must understand by it the clean oblation of the New Testament, the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, which never becomes unclean, even though the priest who offers, or the congregation present at it, be unclean. For these reasons the Council of Trent (*Sess. 22. c. 1.*) declares, "that this prophecy of Malachias obtains its fulfilment in the holy Sacrifice of the Mass;" and the Fathers of the Church have understood it in the same manner.

## *II. On the Institution and Continual Celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in the Catholic Church.*

All that the sacrifices of the Old Testament so plainly represented and the sacred prophecies so clearly announced, Christ fulfilled on the day before His passion. In that great last hour, which He had awaited with such longing, that He might accomplish the work of redemption and consummate His offering, He gathered His disciples around Him. The solemnity of His whole mien, the pathos in His countenance and in His voice, drew their attention and made them feel that He intended something great. The paschal lamb was eaten, the feet of the disciples were washed, they were gathered at the table, around the Saviour, full of expectation. Then, says the gospel, taking bread, he gave thanks, and brake, and gave to them, saying: This is my body which is given for you: Do this for a commemoration of me. In like manner the chalice also, saying: This is the chalice, the new testament in my blood. (*Luke xxii. 19, 20.; Matt. xxvi. 26—28.*) Here then Christ as High-priest according to the Order of Melchisedech offers Himself: This is my body which is given for you, this is my blood which shall be shed for many for the remission of sin. If then the body and blood of Christ in the blessed Sacrament are the same body and blood as that offered and shed upon the cross, it is certainly a sacrifice of body and blood, and as Christ wished this sacrifice to continue in His Church, He added: Do this in commemoration of me, which was giving authority and command to His apostles and their successors, to do that which He had done. These consecrated and offered also, breaking bread from house to house (*Acts ii. 46.*) where the early Christians gathered in order to receive this bread of heaven; they offered on altars, for St. Paul plainly says they had an altar, (*Hebr. xiii. 10.*) and where there is an altar, there must be an offering. And not the apostles only, but their successors offered this sacrifice.



St. Irenaeus, who was a disciple of St. Polycarp, himself a pupil of St. John, writes: "Christ taught a new sacrifice of the New Testament, which the Church received from the apostles, and offers throughout the world." St. Justin in his vindication, addressed to the Roman emperors, testifies to the same thing. St. Cyril plainly speaks of an unbloody, divine service of the Christians and of their participation in the body and blood of the Saviour. St. Chrysostom writes: "This is a pure and, indeed, the first of offerings, a mysterious table, a heavenly and most venerable sacrifice." St. Augustine says: "Christ is our eternal High-priest according to the order of Melchisedech, because He gave Himself as a sacrifice for our sins, and commanded a similar sacrifice to be celebrated in commemoration of His sufferings, so we see that which Melchisedech offered to God, is now offered throughout the world by the Church of Christ!" From these testimonies of the oldest Fathers, the number of which might be greatly increased, it is made clear that the holy sacrifice of the Mass has always been celebrated in the Catholic Church, not invented in later days, and the heretics by their rejection of this sacrifice are proved to be at variance with all Christian antiquity. By the abuse of the Church's doctrine on this point, they prove only their own ill will, and their pitiable blindness, but not the falsity of the Catholic doctrine.

### *III. On the nature of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the ends for which it is offered.*

In the closer sense\* of the word, a sacrifice is something external, visible to the senses, which is offered by an authorized minister, and which is either consumed or outwardly changed, in order to show that the rational creature is absolutely subject to God's government. With this meaning of the word sacrifice the holy Sacrifice of the Mass perfectly corresponds, because all the properties of a sacrifice are found in it.

In the holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered:

An external and visible thing, the body and blood of Christ, under the form of bread and wine, which are external and visible.

Under these forms there is truly and actually offered up to God the body and blood of His only-begotten Son.

This is done through a minister, the priest, who is specially authorized and commanded by God.

The forms offered up are changed into the body and blood of Christ, and are then received and consumed by the priest and the faithful in holy Communion. The Sacrifice of the Mass is, therefore, the true offering, the continual unbloody sacrifice of the New Testament, in which the real body and the real blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are offered by the hands of the priest to God, the Most High, and offered with the same intention as on the cross, namely: 1. for the reconciliation of sinful humanity with God, so that we, if we assist at it with lively faith and sincere repentance, obtain mercy and grace,—a propitiatory sacrifice; 2. for the praise and glory of the infinite Majesty of God,—a sacrifice of adoration; 3. in thanks for His infinite goodness to us all,—a sacrifice of thanksgiving; 4. to implore God's help in all our spiritual and corporal needs,—a sacrifice of impetration. There is then only this difference between the Sacrifice of the Cross and the Sacrifice of the Mass, that the Sacrifice of the Cross was accomplished by the shedding of

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\* Concerning Sacrifice in its wider sense see Instruction for the Fifth Sunday after Pentecost.



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Christ's blood, and the Sacrifice of the Mass is accomplished without shedding it. Otherwise the two sacrifices are the same, for the same Christ here offers Himself in an unbloody manner, who offered Himself in a bloody manner on the cross. According to the doctrine of the Church the Sacrifice of the Mass, therefore, is not merely a representation or commemoration of the Sacrifice of the Cross, but a continuation and accomplishment of it.

### *IV. The Value and Efficacy of the Sacrifice of the Mass.*

All the merits of the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God, the adoration of all the angels, the labors of the apostles, the sufferings of the martyrs, the rigorous life of the penitents and the hermits, the purity of the virgins, the virtues of the confessors, in a word, the good works of all the saints who have ever lived, do live, and shall live until the end of time, are not worth so much as one single Sacrifice of the Mass. This is a dogma of the Church, and its reason is easily seen: for all the homage which creatures can show to God, is only a finite homage, while the homage shown to God in the holy Sacrifice is an infinite homage, since it is shown Him by His only-begotten Son, who is at once both God and Man. The priest is but the servant; it is Christ, the Son of God, who offers and is offered, and, therefore, this sacrifice has an infinite, superabundant value. Of all works there is none more beautiful and more acceptable to God than the Mass, none which can so effectually disarm His anger, none which gives such terrific blows to the powers of hell, none which gives such abundance of grace to the poor pilgrims of earth, such relief to the suffering souls in purgatory. The Abbot St. Odo says: "The Mass is the work to which the world's salvation is bound." "The earth," adds St. Timothy of Jerusalem, "is under obligations to the Mass for its preservation; but for the Mass, the sins of men would long ago have annihilated it." "The Sacrifice of the Altar," says St. Thomas, "is as effectual as the offering on Mount Calvary." "A Mass," says St. Chrysostom, "is of as much value as the offering on Calvary." Like that offering, the Mass has in itself power to satisfy God's justice, always to effect our reconciliation with Him, and make us participators in grace for forgiveness of sins; for He who offers the sacrifice, is the same who is offered, He is the Son of God, equal to His Father, He is one with those for whom He offers the sacrifice, for He is man like to us in all but sin; He is Himself both High-priest and Victim, of whom St. John says: He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world. (i. *John* ii. 2.) From this it follows:

1. That the sacrifice does not lose its efficacy, even though offered by an unworthy priest, for Christ is not only the victim, but He is the Priest who offers it; as an alms loses none of its power and worth, even though dispensed by a bad servant;

2. that the efficacy of the Mass extends to all men, that it can be offered and is offered for both the living and the dead, when they belong to the communion of the Catholic Church; for the conversion of sinners, heretics and idolaters, and for obtaining corporal and spiritual help. Concerning sacrifice for the departed, Mass for the dead, Tertullian († A. D. 220) writes, "that prayer for the dead is a very old custom, confirmed by tradition;" and St. Chrysostom adds: "The apostles did not order without reason that when celebrating the mysteries, commemoration should be made for those who have passed away from among us." The fruits of the Sacrifice of the Mass are bestowed upon the souls in purgatory as intercession for them, that their sufferings may be lessened, and they released from them;



3. that the faithful should pray devoutly, especially at the celebration of the holy Sacrifice. Then they will be more easily heard, for Christ, the Head of the living members of the Church which is His body, here offers Himself as our only mediator, and prays for graces for us. Shall the prayers of the faithful, united with the prayers of Jesus, fail to reach the throne of God? Therefore it is, that pious Christians love most of all to present their petitions, homage and thanks to God at Mass, and while praying Him that He will accept them for the sake of Christ, their Redeemer and their Head, they perform that which we call attending or hearing Mass;

4. that it is allowed and very profitable to pray at Mass for our fellow-men, since Christ especially requires that we should intercede for one another, and it is certainly pleasing to Him if we commend to Him there, where He is offered on our altars in purest love for all, our parents, friends, those who are sick, in distress or in affliction, so that they may find help and consolation;

5. that if the Mass is offered in honor of the Blessed Virgin or any of the saints, it is not to be understood that the Mass is offered to them, but merely, as the Church teaches, that it is offered in commemoration of their victory over themselves and the world, and is simply a Mass of thanksgiving for the graces which God bestowed upon them and the glory which He has imparted to them, and a Rogatory Mass by which we beseech the saints, the glorified members of Christ's body, to intercede for us that we may work out our salvation. Thus St. Augustine says: "We do not raise our altars to martyrs, but to God Himself, though on the graves of martyrs. No one of our predecessors has ever said: We offer to thee, O Peter or Paul. Whatever is offered, is offered to God who crowns the saints."

6. Finally, that it is a superstitious belief to ascribe to some Masses, to those of the Heavenly Court or the Gregorian, &c., greater efficacy than to others. For in every Mass there is the same Victim and the same Priest, Jesus Christ, eternally blessed.

### *V. The Constituent Parts and Ceremonies of the Mass.*

The holy Sacrifice of the Mass is in its nature ever the same, as the Council of Trent expressly declares, (*Sess. 22, c. 6.*) whether celebrated with singing and many assistants at the altar, (high Mass, grand high Mass) or quietly without singing and with only one or two assistants, (low Mass) whether some of the faithful receive holy Communion or not.

The name Mass was given to the holy Sacrifice in the beginning of Christianity and means dismissal; in the early Christian times the people were formally dismissed by the deacon, hence the name. There were properly two dismissals by the deacon: the first after the gospel and sermon, and was addressed to the Catechumens and the public penitents who were obliged to leave the Church before the Offertory: the second was at the end of the sacrifice, when the deacon dismissed all with the words: *Ite, Missa est*, "Go, Mass is ended;" this latter dismissal is still in use.

The Sacrifice of the Mass consists of three principal parts: the Offertory, the Consecration, and the Communion; besides there are preparatory prayers, and prayers of thanksgiving.

The Church has surrounded the celebration of the holy Sacrifice of the Mass with various ceremonies, in accordance with its dignity and efficacy, which are divided into the ceremonies of the altar, of the priestly dress, and of the manner of offering the sacrifice.



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I. The altar, at the time of the persecutions of the Christians a four-cornered table of wood, afterwards of stone, represents Mount Calvary, where Christ was crucified, the cross upon which He consummated His bloody sacrifice and especially Christ Himself who, as the apostle expresses it, (*Matt.* xxi. 42.; *Eph.* ii. 21, 22.) is the foundation-stone of the Church, the one who offers, the sacrifice, and the altar. The altar-cloth which covers the altar, represents the linen cloth in which Christ's body was wrapped.

### II. The priestly vestments consist of several articles:

1. The veil or amice which served originally to cover the neck which the dress of the times left uncovered, and should remind the priest and the faithful of the Son of God who, when He came down from heaven, veiled His divinity under His humanity; of the contest which the priest has always to sustain against the temptations of the evil one, wherefore he prays when putting it on: "O Lord, place upon my head the helmet of salvation for protection against the temptations of the devil;" and of the cloth with which the Saviour was blindfolded, when the soldiers mocked Him.

2. The alb, a long, white robe, which reminds us by its whiteness of interior purity, by its length of the perseverance in good works with which the priest should be clothed; of that white robe in which the faithful servants in heaven, who follow the Lamb, are arrayed, as seen by St. John, whence the prayer: "Purify my heart, O Lord, and make me wholly pure, that I may be washed clean in the blood of the Lamb and receive eternal happiness;" and of that garment, which, in mockery, was put upon Christ at the command of Herod.

3. The cincture or girdle, used to keep the robe in place, reminds the priest, that in celebrating the holy Sacrifice he must throw away the last vestige of sensual and worldly life, on which account he says: "Gird me, O Lord, with the girdle of purity, and extinguish in me every inclination to improper desires;" it also recalls to our minds the ropes with which Christ was bound.

4. The maniple which the priest wears on his left arm, was originally a little handkerchief serving to free the face from perspiration; it still reminds the priest, that he can enter heaven only by evangelical labors, sweat and tears, hence the prayer: "Make me worthy, O Lord, to carry the maniple of pain and tears, that I may receive with joy the reward of labor." It also represents the handkerchief with which our Lord dried His blood-stained face.

5. The stole is the symbol of the priestly power and dignity, reminding the wearer, in the first place, of the spiritual vesture of justice and innocence, lost by original sin, but regained by Christ's death. The priest, therefore, prays when putting it on: "Give me once more the vesture of immortality which I have lost by the sin of the first man, and although unworthy I go to celebrate Thy sacred mystery may I nevertheless merit eternal joy;" and secondly, of the chains which Christ carried in order to break the chains of the first sin.

6. The chasuble, formerly made like a round cloak without opening at the sides, represents the holy love with which the priest, like His divine Master, should embrace all mankind and shelter them as in the folds of a cloak; the yoke of Christ, that is, His doctrine, which he should bear all through life, wherefore he prays: "O Lord, who hast said: My yoke is sweet and my burden light, grant that I may so bear it as to obtain Thy grace." It also represents the cross carried by Christ, which the priest by mortification of the flesh should bear in His footsteps.



7. The beretta which the priest wears on his head, reminds him of the recollection with which he should offer the holy sacrifice, and the crown of thorns with which his Lord and Master was crowned.

The color of the vestments varies according to the occasion upon which they are used. White is worn in token of joy and praise on festivals of our Lord, of the Blessed Virgin, and of confessors, and represents the innocence and purity of our Lord, His Mother and the saints. Red is worn at Pentecost and on the festivals of martyrs, and is a sign of the fire of love which the Holy Ghost kindles in the hearts of the faithful. Violet which shows the necessity of a penitential life, is used on days of penance in Lent and Advent. Green, the emblem of the hope and happiness which Christ has obtained for us, is worn on Sundays upon which no particular festival is celebrated. Black, the token of death and sorrow, is used in Masses for the dead.

III. The manner of offering the holy Sacrifice is contained in the ceremonies which the Church, according to tradition and ancient direction, has ordered for the celebration of the holy mysteries; for the Council of Trent says, (*Sess. 22. c. 5.*) that the nature of man requires external signs by which to elevate the spirit to the contemplation of the divine mysteries, and to increase the solemnity of the sacrifice.

THE PREPARATION for the holy Sacrifice begins at the foot of the altar; there the priest makes the sign of the cross, recites the forty-second psalm, some short verses, and makes a general confession of sin, by which he acknowledges himself unworthy to ascend the altar without having previously asked pardon of God. The priest then and often afterwards makes the sign of the cross, and at the *Dominus vobiscum*, "The Lord be with you," raises his hands to heaven, because he expects all salvation from Christ, the Crucified, who now sits at the right hand of His Father. At the conclusion of the prayers at the foot of the altar, the priest ascends the altar-steps, praying that God may take from him and the people all their sins; he then reverently kisses the part of the altar in which the relics of the saints are kept, in reverence for Christ whom the altar represents, and for the saints whose relics are enclosed within. The kissing of the altar, which occurs often during Mass, expresses the priest's desire to become united with Christ, as the Head, and with the saints, as members of the Christian communion. The priest now goes to the right of the altar and says the *Introit*, which is usually a passage from the psalms or from the prophets, appropriate to the day, and closes with the *Gloria Patri*, "Glory be to the Father."

The priest then goes to the middle of the altar, and alternately with his assistants says nine times the *Kyrie eleison*, "Lord, have mercy on us," three times invoking for mercy each of the Three Divine Persons of the Blessed Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; this prayer may be called a continuation of the prayers at the foot of the altar. This is followed by the *Gloria*, that hymn of praise which commences with the words sung by the angels at Christ's birth, to which the Church has made some additions. This hymn follows immediately after the *Kyrie eleison*, because the Church intends that the faithful shall be encouraged to trust that the cry for mercy has not been in vain, for Christ is appearing, at whose birth the angels sang: Glory be to God and peace to men!

The priest then turns to the people and says: *Dominus vobiscum*, then turning back says the *Orison* or *Collect*, that is, a collected prayer, because in it the prayers and wishes of all the faithful are gathered in one



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and offered to God. The collect is different in almost every Mass, but always contains a petition for spiritual benefits.

After this prayer, or orison, follows the Lesson or Epistle, which is generally from the Epistles of the apostles; at the end of this the clerk responds *Deo gratias*, "Thanks be to God."

Next come the Gradual, the Alleluia, the Tract, and the Sequence. The Gradual, or the singing at the altar-steps, so called because in early times it was sung by a lector on the steps at a desk, on which the Epistle was read, consists of some verses from the psalms. The Alleluia, "Praise to God," is a song of joy, omitted in Lent. In its place during penitential seasons the Tract, a grave, earnest song, also from the psalms, is sung to a mournful air. The Sequences are hymns of the Church, which are used on certain occasions, as Easter, Pentecost, Corpus Christi, and in Masses for the dead.

The priest next repeats at the middle of the altar the short prayer: *Munda cor meum*, "Cleanse my heart," in which he entreats God to grant him the grace properly to announce the gospel which he then proceeds to read or to sing, beginning with the words: *Sequentia sancti Evangelii*, "The continuation of the holy gospel according to . . .", to which the assistant replies, *Gloria tibi Domine*, "Glory be to Thee, O Lord," and at the conclusion, *Laus tibi Christe*, "Praise be to Thee, O Christ." After reading the gospel, the priest kisses the book in reverence for the word of God, and says: "May our sins be blotted out by the words of the gospel." \*

The Gospel is followed by the Credo, "I believe", which is the creed established by the Fathers of the Council of Nice in the year 323, in contradiction to the Arian heresy which denied Christ's divinity, and has since been said on all Sundays, festivals of the Lord, of the Blessed Virgin, of the apostles and Fathers of the Church.

With the creed ends the preparation for Mass, and the first of the principal parts of the Mass begins with:

### THE OFFERTORY.

The priest now takes the bread and wine, (which in early times were brought by the people to the Church and laid on the altar, but are now previously prepared) and offers them to God, supplicating Him to let these offerings be acceptable in His sight. The priest then washes his hands as a sign of that perfect purification which is necessary for the offering of the most holy Sacrifice, and having at the middle of the altar said a short prayer to the Most Holy Trinity, turns to the people, asking them in these words to join with him in prayer: *Orate, fratres*, "Brethren, pray" &c. The assistants answer in the name of the people with a prayer, that God may accept this offering from his hands, the priest responds *Amen* and repeats the *Secreta*, the prayers asking for spiritual grace, which are said in a low, subdued voice; the *Secreta* is followed by the *Preface*, that is, the Introit or Entrance to the Mass proper,

### THE CANON.

With the preface commences the second principal part of the Mass, which contains the Consecration, and is called the Canon or rule, because it aids in

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\* For Explanation of the Sign of the Cross which the priest makes before and after the gospel, see Instruction on the "Finding of the holy Cross."



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the worthy celebration and accomplishment of the holy Sacrifice, and is for the priest an unalterable law. The Canon consists of prayers said before and after the Consecration, and at the Consecration itself, until the *Pater noster*, when the Canon ends; it is said in a low voice through reverence for the most holy Sacrifice. Before the Consecration the priest standing at the middle of the altar, raises his eyes and hands to heaven in acknowledgment of being now on the point of advancing nearer to the throne of the Almighty. Conscious of his unworthiness he then rests his folded hands on the altar, bows down his head, and prays with down-cast eyes, standing like Moses between God and the people, to the Heavenly Father, beseeching Him graciously to accept and receive these offered gifts, which are appointed for this holy, unspotted Sacrifice, and graciously to remember the Pope, the bishop, the whole Church, and all who are present at the sacrifice; for which graces the priest implores the saints to intercede with him, and once more makes the often repeated petition, that God may bless the offering and make it acceptable in His sight. Then placing his hands over the chalice and the host, in sign that he lays his own and the people's sins upon the Sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, the priest commences

### THE CONSECRATION,

in which he repeats, not in his own name but in the name of Jesus, in deepest reverence and humility the mysterious words of Consecration; by which the bread and wine are changed, in a wonderful and mysterious manner, into the real body and blood of Jesus. As soon as this is done, the priest raises for adoration the consecrated Host and the sacred Blood in the chalice. After the Elevation the priest prays God graciously to accept the changed gifts, the Sacrifice of the New Testament, as He was graciously pleased to accept the first gifts of Abel and the typical sacrifices of Abraham and Melchisedech, then makes a *Memento* for the Dead, and next remembering himself and all unworthy sinners, strikes his breast, beseeching God to permit him and all the faithful to participate in the glory of the chosen ones, through Jesus Christ by whom alone is given all true life and salvation.

With this ends the Canon, which is followed by the prayers which are said in the third part of the Mass or

### THE COMMUNION.

The priest says aloud the Lord's prayer, adding to the petition "Deliver us from evil", the supplication that God would deliver him and all the people from all evil past, present, and to come, and give true peace in our days by the intercession of the saints; he breaks the Host in commemoration of the breaking of bread at the Last Supper, and in recollection of the violent death of the Saviour, and lets a small portion of it drop into the chalice, because though the bread and wine were separately changed, each is as much as the other the whole and undivided God-Man, Jesus Christ.

The priest then bows down before Christ, the true paschal Lamb, and striking his breast three times in acknowledgment of his sinfulness, he says three times the *Agnus Dei*, "Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us", the last time instead of "have mercy on us", he says, "grant us peace". With bowed head he then asks for peace for the whole Church, for the grace worthily to receive Christ, our Lord, says three times *Domine, non sum dignus*, "Lord, I am not worthy, that thou shouldst enter under



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my roof', &c. receives the body and blood of Christ, and administers the holy communion to the faithful who wish to receive.

### POST-COMMUNION,

from the Communion to the Last Gospel, consists of several prayers of thanksgiving, the *Ite Missa est*, the last blessing, and the Gospel of St. John.

#### *VI. Manner of Hearing the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.*

In order to hear Mass profitably in the sense and spirit of the Church, we should know, in the first place, that the Mass is that sacrifice, which we should offer with our whole being, with all that we are or have, to Almighty God for His glory, in satisfaction for our sins, in thanksgiving for graces received and in supplication for those still necessary, a sacrifice which we ourselves, because of our wretched sinfulness, cannot offer and therefore Christ Himself offers for us; we should be united with God by the most intimate participation in the Sacrifice of Jesus, and we should understand that the Sacrifice of the Mass is also an unbloody renewal of the sacrifice on Calvary. Thus we must hear Mass in a threefold manner.

First, by remembering at the beginning of Mass, that we ourselves should be the offering of reconciliation to God's justice, but that Jesus, the Son of God, out of infinite love, gave Himself to us as an offering by which we become reconciled with His Father, perfectly glorify and thank Him; and though the priest stands alone at the altar, alone speaking, and with his hands offers the sacrifice we must unite ourselves with him and offer the sacrifice with him. The first manner of hearing Mass is to perform the sacrifice with the priest, doing as far as we can, in spirit, that which he does, remembering that we have met not only to hear Mass, but at the same time to perform and offer the sacrifice with the priest.

To do this, we should humble ourselves with the priest at the foot of the altar, as poor sinners before God, imploring mercy; at the Gloria praise God with the priest, at the Epistle and Gospel thank God for His sacred word, resolving to live faithfully in accordance with it; at the Credo make a profession of faith with heart and lips, earnestly promising to live and die in the holy Catholic Church; at the Offertory offer our heart with all its desires and inclinations, a sacrifice to God; at the Sanctus to praise God with all the angels and saints. Before the Elevation we should be sincerely sorry for our sins, consider that we are unworthy to appear in the sight of God, remember that we must make satisfaction for our sins, and at the Memento for the living, make a memento with the priest. We can here follow St. Francis Borgia, who vividly represented to himself, during the holy Sacrifice, the bloody Sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and meditated in his memento upon the five wound's of Jesus. At the thought of the wound of the right hand, he commended to God the Pope, bishops and priests; at the wound of the left hand, officers of justice, and heads of the civil power; at the wound of the right foot, all spiritual orders; at the left, all relations, friends, benefactors, and all who had commended themselves to his prayers. The wound in the side he reserved for himself, in this he entered and hid himself with all his wishes and anxieties. He made the memento for the dead in the same way, commending his departed friends, benefactors and all for whom he intended to pray, and all forsaken souls, through the wounds of Jesus, offering them with Him to God. At the Elevation, we should with the priest, in deepest reverence, adore Jesus, offering Him, the true Lamb of Sacrifice, to God the



Father, for His glory, in thanksgiving for graces received, in satisfaction for our sins and for the sins of the whole world, for help in our needs and our weakness, and in supplication for new graces, offering ourselves also entirely for the same objects. After the Elevation, we should adore the Saviour present on the altar, thank Him for His gracious condescension, exciting in ourselves the ardent desire of a sincere union with Him and through Him with his Heavenly Father. Herein consists:

The Second Form of Devotion at Mass, belonging to the third principal part, reaching from the Pater noster to the end, which includes the priest's reception of the holy Communion. For the Church desires that the faithful should unite themselves at every Mass with Jesus by Communion, and through Him with His Heavenly Father, becoming one with Him, which is the great end of the Sacrifice of Jesus. But as actual Communion at every Mass is not possible, we should receive Communion spiritually, that is, excite in ourselves the fervent desire to be spiritually united with Christ; spiritually because we can then receive only the spiritual fruit, that is, a very intimate union with Christ, and a share in the spiritual gifts and graces given to those who receive Him sacramentally. If we desire to make a spiritual Communion with the priest at Mass, then we should, after the Pater noster, sincerely repent of our sins, awaken in ourselves a vivid faith in Christ's presence, a firm confidence in His merits, and a fervent love for Him, and then at the priest's Communion excite within us an ardent desire to receive Christ and be united to Him. When this is done, we should thank God for the graces we have received and recall to our minds, during the day, the goodness and love of this divine Saviour, whose pleasure it is to be with the children of men, to enrich them with His blessings.

The Third Form of Devotion consists in placing before our minds that this holy Sacrifice is a commemoration of Christ's sufferings, and of that great love which He has shown us. Christ foresaw that if we assisted at this sacrifice, it would be a continual recollection of what He had suffered for us, a powerful incentive to the soul to love Him and serve Him, and for the vivid conception of this, the ceremonies of the Mass are a great aid. By meditating upon the ceremonies of the Mass we are reminded of the whole passion of Christ, and are able to walk, so to speak, over the path of His sufferings, as seen by the following:

### MEANING OF THE CEREMONIES AT MASS.

#### *The Priest.*

1. Goes to the altar.
2. Commences Mass.
3. Says Confiteor.
4. Goes up and kisses the altar.
5. Goes to the Epistle side.
6. Reads the Introit.
7. Goes to the middle of the altar and says the Kyrie eleison.
8. Says the Dominus vobiscum.
9. Reads the Epistle.
10. Says the Munda cor meum at the middle of the altar.

#### *Christ.*

1. Goes to Mount Olivet.
2. Begins to pray.
3. Falls down and sweats blood.
4. Is betrayed by Judas with a kiss.
5. Is captured, bound, and taken to Annas.
6. Is falsely accused by Annas and blasphemed.
7. Is brought to Caiphas and there three times denied by Peter.
8. Looks at Peter and converts him.
9. Is brought to Pilate.
10. Is taken to Herod and mocked.



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11. Reads the Gospel.

12. Uncovers the chalice.

13. Offers bread and wine.

14. Covers the chalice.

15. Washes his hands.

16. Says the Orate Fratres.

17. Prays in a low voice.

18. Says the Preface and the Sanctus.

19. Makes the Memento for the living.

20. Continues to pray in a low voice.

21. Blesses the bread and wine with the sign of the cross.

22. Elevates the sacred Host.

23. Elevates the chalice.

24. Prays in a low voice.

25. Says aloud, *Nobis quoque peccatoribus.*

26. Says aloud the *Pater noster.*

27. Breaks and separates the Host.

28. Lets a small portion of the sacred Host fall into the chalice.

29. Says the *Agnus Dei.*

30. Administers holy Communion.

31. Cleanses the chalice.

32. Prepares the chalice again.

33. Says the *Dominus vobiscum.*

34. Says the last prayers.

35. Says the last *Dominus vobiscum.*

36. Gives the benediction to the people.

37. Says the *Ita Missa est* and the last gospel.

11. Is taken back to Pilate and again mocked.

12. Is shamefully exposed.

13. Is cruelly scourged.

14. Is crowned with thorns.

15. Is declared innocent by Pilate.

16. Is shown by Pilate to the people with the words, *Ecce homo.*

17. Is mocked and spit upon.

18. Is preferred instead of Barrabas and condemned to crucifixion.

19. Carries the cross to Mount Calvary.

20. Meets His Mother and other pious women.

21. Is nailed to the cross.

22. Is raised on the cross.

23. Sheds blood from the five wounds.

24. Sees His afflicted Mother at the cross.

25. Prays on the cross for men.

26. Says the seven words on the cross.

27. Gives up His spirit and dies.

28. His soul descends to Limbo.

29. Is acknowledged on the cross as the Son of God by many bystanders.

30. Is laid in the sepulchre.

31. Is anointed by pious women.

32. Arises from the dead.

33. Appears to His mother and the disciples.

34. Teaches for forty days.

35. Takes leave of His disciples and ascends to heaven.

36. Sends down the Holy Ghost.

37. Sends the apostles into all parts of the world to preach the gospel.

In this manner we can bring Christ's passion vividly before our eyes and unite ourselves with the sufferings of our divine Saviour, which is the leading idea of the holy Mass. We should not fail at every representation to make short acts of love, repentance, humility, submission and thanksgiving.

Whoever assists at the holy Sacrifice of the Mass in the manner described, and performs this devotion with deep reverence and attention, with recollection and fervent contrition, will surely not go away void of graces; for if God is always prepared to share His graces with us, then will He not most willingly give them there where His only-begotten Son is the true Lamb of Sacrifice, and makes our petitions His own? At the same time it is seen from this, that those who wish the Mass to be said in their own language instead of the Latin, complain unnecessarily, for every one can unite himself with the priest and make his offering in his own tongue, since with God it does not depend upon



the language, and there is in most prayer-books an explanation of the ceremonies connected with suitable prayers. The Catholic Church has very wisely retained the Latin as the language of the Mass, as a means of preserving ecclesiastical unity, and Catholics can everywhere recognize themselves as such, when they find in every land the same divine service in the same language. The holy Sacrifice would besides be endangered by the introduction of the different languages of the countries in which it is said, because the vernacular is always subjected to changes; would give rise to false interpretations, diminish reverence for the most holy Sacrifice, and might endanger the faith itself, while the Latin language is peculiarly suited to the dignity and majesty of the Mass; for it is truly a royal language, and is the language of the missionaries who subjected the world to the cross. The celebration of the Mass is not for the instruction of the people so much as for their edification, and this easily results if each of the faithful assists with heart and lips, as best he can, at the holy Sacrifice, having the sincere desire to share in all its fruits, which our loving Saviour obtained for us on the cross and wishes to bestow upon us. We are enriched by His merits, purified by His most precious blood, nourished and strengthened in the way of virtue by His most sacred body, and are changed from children of wrath to children of God, and chosen heirs of heaven.

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### A GENERAL CONFESSION OF SIN.

**I** a poor, sinful man, renounce the evil enemy, all his suggestions, works, and temptations. I believe in God the Father, in God the Son, and in God the Holy Ghost. I also fully believe everything that the universal Christian Church teaches me to believe. In this faith I confess to God the Almighty, to Mary Christ's most blessed Mother, and to all the saints, that from the days of my childhood to this very hour, I have sinned often and much in thought, word, and deed, and in the omission of good works, and all this either publicly or secretly, voluntarily or involuntarily, against the ten Commandments, by the seven deadly sins, the five senses of my body, against God, against my neighbor, against the salvation of my own poor soul. For these and all my sins I am sorry from my heart. Therefore I humbly beseech Thee, Eternal, Merciful God, to grant me Thy divine grace, to prolong my life until I have confessed and done penance for my sins and obtained Thy divine mercy, receiving after this miserable life eternal joy and happiness. I strike my sinful breast and say with the publican: O Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner. Amen.

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### A PRAYER FOR THE UNIVERSAL NEEDS OF CHRISTIANITY.

**A**LMIGHTY and Eternal God, Lord and Heavenly Father! Look with eyes of boundless mercy on our misery, distress and necessity. Have mercy upon all faithful Christians, for whom Thy only-begotten Son, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, willingly gave Himself up into the hands of sinners and shed His precious blood on the tree of the cross. For the sake of this Jesus, O most gracious Father, avert well deserved punishment, present and future dangers, rebellions, famines, diseases and afflictions. Enlighten and strengthen in all good our spiritual and civil rulers and superiors, that from henceforth



all things may redound to Thy divine honor, to our salvation, and to the universal peace and welfare of Christianity.

Grant us, O God of peace, a strong union in faith without discord or separation. Turn our hearts to true penance and amendment of life; inflame us with the fire of Thy love; give us an ardent zeal for all justice, that we may become acceptable to Thee, as obedient children, in life and death.

We beseech Thee also, O God, as Thou dost desire we should, for all our friends and enemies, for the well and the sick, for all afflicted and distressed Christians, for the living and the dead. To Thee, O Lord, we commend all our actions and all our omissions, our employment, our life and death. Let us enjoy Thy grace here, and afterwards receive with the elect eternal joy and happiness, praising and honoring Thee.

This grant us, O Lord, our Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord and Saviour, who lives and reigns with Thee and the Holy Ghost, One God forever. Amen.

## ACTS OF THE DIVINE VIRTUES.

### *Act of Faith.*

**M**Y God, I believe in Thee, that Thou art single in nature and threefold in person, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. I believe that Thou dost reward the good and punish the wicked. I believe that the Son of God became man, died on the cross for us, and is present in the holy Sacrament of the Altar. I believe that man's soul is immortal, and that God's grace is necessary for salvation. This and all that the Catholic Church teaches, I firmly believe, because Thou, O God, who art infinite truth and wisdom, hast revealed it. In this faith I will live and die.

### *Act of Hope.*

I hope from Thee, O most gracious God, through the merits of Christ, my Redeemer, and by my coöperation, all things good, the forgiveness of my sins, Thy grace and eternal life, because Thou, O almighty, infinitely gracious and faithful God, hast promised this. In this hope may I live and die.

### *Act of Love.*

I love Thee, O most amiable God, with my whole heart above all created things, not only because Thou hast loved me and heaped innumerable favors upon me, but especially because Thou art infinitely worthy of all love for Thy own sake, and because Thou art infinitely good. I love my neighbors, my friends, and my enemies as myself for love of Thee, and Thee in them. In this love I will live and die.

### *Act of Contrition.*

I grieve from the bottom of my heart, O my God, for all the sins of my whole life, because by them I have offended Thee, my greatest Benefactor and strict Judge, and have deserved to be punished by Thee. I am sorry for all the sins of my whole life, above all because by them I have offended God, the highest and only perfect Good, whom I have lost by my sins. I hope for forgiveness through the merits of Jesus, my Saviour, and would rather die than again offend Him.

ALL FOR THE GREATER HONOR OF GOD AND OF  
THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY!

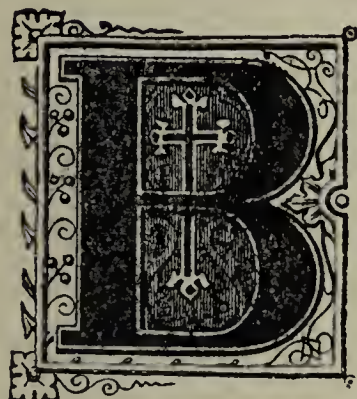


## MANNER OF FOLLOWING MASS AT HOME.

For those who on account of sickness, old age, or for other sufficient reasons cannot assist at holy Mass, especially on Sundays and Holydays.

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### PREFATORY REMARKS.



BEAR in mind, O Christian soul, that those who would be present at the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, if it were possible, such as the sick, the infirm, the aged, fathers or mothers who must remain at home with the little children, and for other reasons, are all included in the holy Sacrifice, that is, take part in the prayers of the Church, in the blessings and merits of the Sacrifice, if they have a sincere desire to hear Mass.

The holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered for all the faithful. As Christ offered Himself for all men on the cross, so He now offers Himself in the Mass in an unbloody manner for all, hence all partake of the blessings and merits of His sacrifice who assist at Mass with sentiments pleasing to Him. And if you are kept at home, the priest prays, the Church prays, our Saviour Jesus Christ offers Himself, and the merits and



blessing of the holy Sacrifice flow to you, if you only heartily desire it, and unite your prayers at home with the prayers of the priest and the whole congregation. Therefore kneel in spirit before the altar and devoutly make a

### GOOD INTENTION.

My Father and my God, Thou knowest how sincerely I would like to assist at the Sacrifice of Thy beloved Son, my Redeemer, which is now being offered to Thee upon the altar by the hands of the priest; but obstacles as Thou knowest, prevent me. Because I cannot now be present in Thy holy house, do Thou graciously look down upon the desire of my heart, and let me have part in the prayers of Thy holy Church and in the blessings and merits of Thy divine Son, who died for me on the cross, and again offers Himself in an unbloody manner upon the altar. With the same intention with which the priest offers the holy Sacrifice on the altar, I also offer it to Thee for Thy praise and glory, in thanksgiving for all gifts and graces which Thou hast granted me, to reconcile Thee with me, a poor sinner, and for forgiveness of my sins, and with the most fervent petition, that Thou wilt be to me in my cares and afflictions a gracious Father, and for the sake of Thy Son Jesus not refuse me Thy aid.

O my holy Guardian Angel, do thou stand by my side and unite thy prayers with mine, that they may be acceptable to God's Majesty, and do thou, my beloved Mother Mary, assist me that I may attend in spirit the unbloody Sacrifice of the Mass with the same intention as thou didst have, when thou didst assist at the bloody Sacrifice of the cross. Amen.



## FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF MASS TO THE GOSPEL.

My Lord and my God! Creator of heaven and earth, the highest Majesty! how can I presume to raise my hands and pray to Thee? Thou art infinite holiness, in whose sight even the angels are not pure, Thou art the Almighty, before whom even the blessed spirits veil their faces, and I, what am I? Nothing but a poor sinner, dust and ashes, who long ago deserved punishment. But Thou art also infinitely gracious and merciful. In the spirit of the deepest contrition and humility, behold, I prostrate myself before Thee with the priest and confess my fault, my great fault, my greatest fault. From my inmost heart I grieve for all my sins and crimes, earnestly beseeching Thee, O my good God and Father, to bestow forgiveness upon me. With the priest I penitently call upon Thee, have mercy on me, O Lord, have mercy on me! Thy mercy is indeed infinitely great, and a contrite heart Thou wilt never despise. And if my sorrow and contrition are not sufficient, O Father in heaven, then graciously accept the penitent tears of all the holy penitents, the dolours of my beloved Mother Mary under the cross, and the grief of Thy most tender heart for the sins of men. Graciously accept the homage which the Church offers Thee, to which I also add my poor adoration. To Thee, O God on high, be glory! Would that Thou mightest be everywhere glorified! Would that Thy most holy name might be everywhere honored and praised! For this Thou didst send Thine only-begotten Son upon earth, for this, that all men might acknowledge Thee, love Thee, learn to serve Thee; and for this Thy divine Son sent His apostles over the whole earth to lead all men to the truth. O give me the grace always to acknowledge the truth which Thy Son brought



upon earth, and ever more faithfully observe His sacred precepts, that I may be acceptable to Thee and eternally happy. Amen.

#### FROM THE GOSPEL TO THE CONSECRATION.

Most heartfelt thanks to Thee, O God! for the Catholic faith in which I was born, and which as a little child I received, without any merit of mine, from Thy hands. O how unfortunate would I be, if like so many others I were left to wander in heresy or unbelief, never finding the light of the true faith, which shines only in the Catholic Church, to lead me to heaven! With joy I profess this my holy faith, and beseech Thee, O my God, with all my heart to grant me the grace to live always in accordance with it. For what would it avail me if I should fully believe every truth the Catholic Church teaches, if I did not also faithfully obey it? O my God, do not permit this ever to happen, do not permit me to give ear to false and evil doctrines, which are everywhere spread by vicious men; do not permit me to become weak in faith, do not permit me to be faithless to the promises I have made Thee in Baptism and holy Communion. I desire to be and to remain a child of Thy holy Church, for in this Church alone can I be happy; for she only has all the means of grace for happiness, she alone possesses the fountain of all grace, the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in which Thine only Son, Jesus, offers Himself to Thee, in order to bestow upon us all that His blood won for us on the cross. I see now, in spirit, the priest standing at the altar with bread and wine in his hands, praying to the Holy Ghost to bless these gifts, that they may be fitted to be changed into the body and blood of Thy beloved Son. I unite my heart to these consecrated gifts of sacrifice, and lay it upon the altar.



I possess nothing which I could give to Thee, but a heart which can and will love Thee. O take this poor heart of mine, purify it from all sins and stains, inflame it with the fire of Thy love, and draw it near to Thee, O infinite Goodness, that it may never more be separated from Thee. At the same time I offer to Thee with my heart all its cares and anxieties. Nothing that weighs upon it is unknown to Thee, O my God, plain before Thy eyes lie all my heart's desires. O do not permit it to desire anything displeasing to Thee, turn it entirely to Thee, and by Thy grace make it ever one with the most loving heart of Thy most beloved Son, who, as long as He was upon earth, sought only that Thy will should be done upon earth as in heaven. Amen.

#### BEFORE THE ELEVATION.

Holy, holy, holy art Thou, O Triune God, and because Thou art infinitely holy, no offering can please Thee as that infinitely holy Sacrifice of Thy Son Jesus, and because Thou art infinitely just, no other Sacrifice can satisfy Thee but this one stainless Sacrifice, which Thy beloved Son offered on the cross, and now in an unbloody manner renews upon the altar. For the sake of this holy Sacrifice now being accomplished on the altar, I beseech Thee, O God in heaven, graciously to look down upon all true Christians and preserve them in the unity of faith and love; permit the light of truth to shine for all unbelievers and heretics, give Thy Holy Spirit to the Pope, our common father and head, to the bishops and priests, that they may lead the souls entrusted to them in the way of salvation to heaven, give the grace of conversion to all poor sinners, console the afflicted, strengthen the weak, guide the erring, assist the wavering, and graciously hear



the prayers of those who supplicate Thee. Remember, O best Father, my poor soul, bought by Thy divine Son with His blood. I confess in deepest humility and most profound sorrow, that I have often stained that soul with sin by transgressing Thy holy commandments; give me but one drop of that Most Precious Blood, and it will become pure and pleasing to Thee. Thou knowest my desire to serve Thee with all faithfulness, O give me Thy grace, always to do Thy holy will: assist me, that I may always follow the beautiful virtues of Thy beloved Son, His humility, His meekness, and become thus always more and more pleasing to Thee. Do not forsake me, O merciful Father, in my crosses and afflictions, and in the heavy cares which weigh upon my heart. Give me strength to bear them, and cause all to redound to Thy honor and the salvation of my own poor soul. Aid me now with your petitions, O most blessed Virgin Mother of God, and all you saints in heaven, in this most solemn hour, when Jesus, the Lamb of God, offers Himself, that my prayers may be heard at the throne of God, before which you stand, singing hymns of praise. You have won and are now happy, we must yet suffer and fight, aid us, that through Christ, our Saviour, we may conquer the enemies of our salvation and meet you in heaven. Amen.

#### AT THE ELEVATION.

Most merciful Heavenly Father! Thou hast given us Thy beloved Son Jesus, and with Him all. He, Thine only Son, is now my possession, He is now present on the altar, and I presume to draw near to Him, presume to offer Him to Thee for Thy glory, in thanksgiving for all Thy graces, for forgiveness of my sins, and for the obtaining of new graces which I so much



need. A thousand thanks to Thee for having given us Thy beloved Son, through whom we poor sinners have access to Thee; through Him, my Jesus, I offer to Thy great Majesty my heart, my body, my soul, everything that I am or have. I offer Thee His infinite merits for my poverty, His infinite virtues for my sinfulness, the holiness of His life upon earth for my crimes, His Most Precious Blood as my appeal for mercy. Have mercy on me, O Father in Heaven, have mercy on me! Forgive me all my offences, and permit me to be and remain Thy child. Amen.

#### AFTER THE ELEVATION.

How infinitely great, O my most loving Jesus, how perfectly incomprehensible is Thy love for us weak men who can do nothing but sin! It was not enough for Thee to die on the cross with unutterable agonies for us, and by that bloody Sacrifice reconcile us sinners with Thy just Father, opening heaven to us, but Thou wouldst daily renew it on our altars, wouldst daily descend from heaven, changing the bread into Thy Sacred Body and the wine into Thy most Precious Blood, presenting to our eyes Thy death upon the cross and giving us all its merits. O who can comprehend this Thine infinite love! And how ungrateful we are to Thee for it? Instead of loving Thee in return, instead of doing everything which is pleasing to Thee, instead of following Thee and becoming always more like Thee, we insult Thee, nail Thee anew by our sins to the cross, drive Thee from us, and follow the broad way of the world, which leads to destruction. I also, O my most loving Saviour, am one of these ingrates; O forgive me, for I am indeed sorry from my whole heart for having acted so ungratefully towards Thee. In deepest humility I fall down before Thee,



confessing my offences, give me but a drop of Thy most Precious Blood, that I may be purified. Look upon me with the eyes of Thy boundless mercy, and give me the grace to love Thee with my whole heart and faithfully to serve Thee. Yes, I love Thee, O Jesus, I love Thee, and will always love Thee. Remember also, O most faithful Jesus, those who have departed from this world in faith in Thee and Thy most holy Church, remember my parents, relations, friends, benefactors: let them share in the merits of Thy most Precious Blood, that they may obtain consolation and comfort in the tortures of purgatory and soon arrive at redemption. Amen.

#### AT THE COMMUNION.

O Jesus, how unutterable is Thy love for man! Thou art not only willing to bestow upon him the merits of Thy holy Sacrifice, but desirest to give Thyself entirely to him, to nourish and strengthen his soul by Thy most Sacred Body and Blood, uniting Thyself wholly with him. How infinitely great is Thy condescension to us, Thy poor creatures! Thou who art infinite Holiness, the Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Lord of legions, desirest to come to us and dwell with us! Who could believe it, if Thou hadst not said it? Since it is, then, certain and true, that Thou dost visit us and dwell in our hearts, I will presume, poor sinner though I am, to draw near to Thee, to unite myself with the priest and earnestly pray and beseech Thee, O Jesus! Come to me! I am not worthy, but Thy great goodness, Thy great mercy permits me to hope, that Thou wilt not refuse to deign to come into my poor heart. I cannot, it is true, now actually receive Thee, Thy Sacred Body and Blood, with the priest, but Thou canst come to me with Thy



effective grace to console, strengthen, purify and sanctify my soul. Come, then, O Jesus, sole desire of my heart! Behold, I dedicate my heart to Thee, may it love only Thee! I dedicate my soul to Thee, may it think only of Thee and be acceptable to Thee! I dedicate my body and all its members to Thee, that they may be used only in doing good. Come, O Jesus, and make me entirely Thine, for Thee I desire to live and to die. Amen.

#### FROM THE COMMUNION TO THE BENEDICTION.

Thou hast now, O most tender Jesus, finished Thy most holy Sacrifice, Thou hast given Thyself for the honor and glory of Thy Heavenly Father, and called at His throne for grace and mercy for us. Thou hast permitted the merits of Thy most holy Sacrifice to flow into our souls. How can I thank Thee enough for it? For if I had the tongues of all the angels, I could not sufficiently praise Thee. Since I have not the power, I offer Thee the praise, adoration and thanks of Thy holy Mother Mary and of all the saints, earnestly beseeching Thee to supply from Thine own loving heart all that I, in my poverty, cannot give Thee. Thou hast given me the grace, O Heavenly Father, to offer Thee Thy divine Son in union with the priest and the congregation, to adore and praise Thee, and to presume to offer Thee the price of the forgiveness of my sins. Thanks be to Thee for this grace. May I stand always firmly in faith in Thee and in Him, Thy only-begotten Son, whom Thou hast sent, may my trust in Thee never become weakened and may I never cease to love Thee as long as I live! Amen.

#### AT THE BENEDICTION.

May † God the Father, † the Son, and † the Holy Ghost bless me. Strengthened by this blessing, I will



seek to-day and at all times to do Thy will, O Holy Trinity. I desire not only to be called Thy child, O Heavenly Father, but to be Thy child, always and at all times to fulfil Thy commandments with filial obedience. I desire not only to be Thy disciple, O Jesus, but to be Thy faithful disciple. I wish to be humble and meek like Thee, at peace with all men, always preserving purity of body and soul, and merciful to all my fellow-men, friends and enemies alike. I will cheerfully follow Thy inspirations, O Divine Spirit, faithfully use the graces with which Thou overloadest me; I will depart from sin, and live for virtue. O Mary blessed Mother of my Saviour, pray for me and assist me to keep my resolutions. Take me, and all for whom I am bound to pray and all my friends, under thy protection and lead us to heaven, where thou livest in glory, that with thee and the saints we may always love and praise the Triune God. Amen.

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## A PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND.



DEAR reader! When you hear of the Holy Land does not your heart beat faster, and are you not seized with an eager longing to see that land where the Sun of Christianity rose in all its pure effulgence, flooding the earth with its beneficent rays? Would you not wish to tread upon those sacred spots where once our Saviour walked, and visit those places which He has sanctified by His birth, His life, and His divine works, His death, His resurrection, and His ascension? Most assuredly such would be your wish. But distance prevents your going. Thousands of miles of land

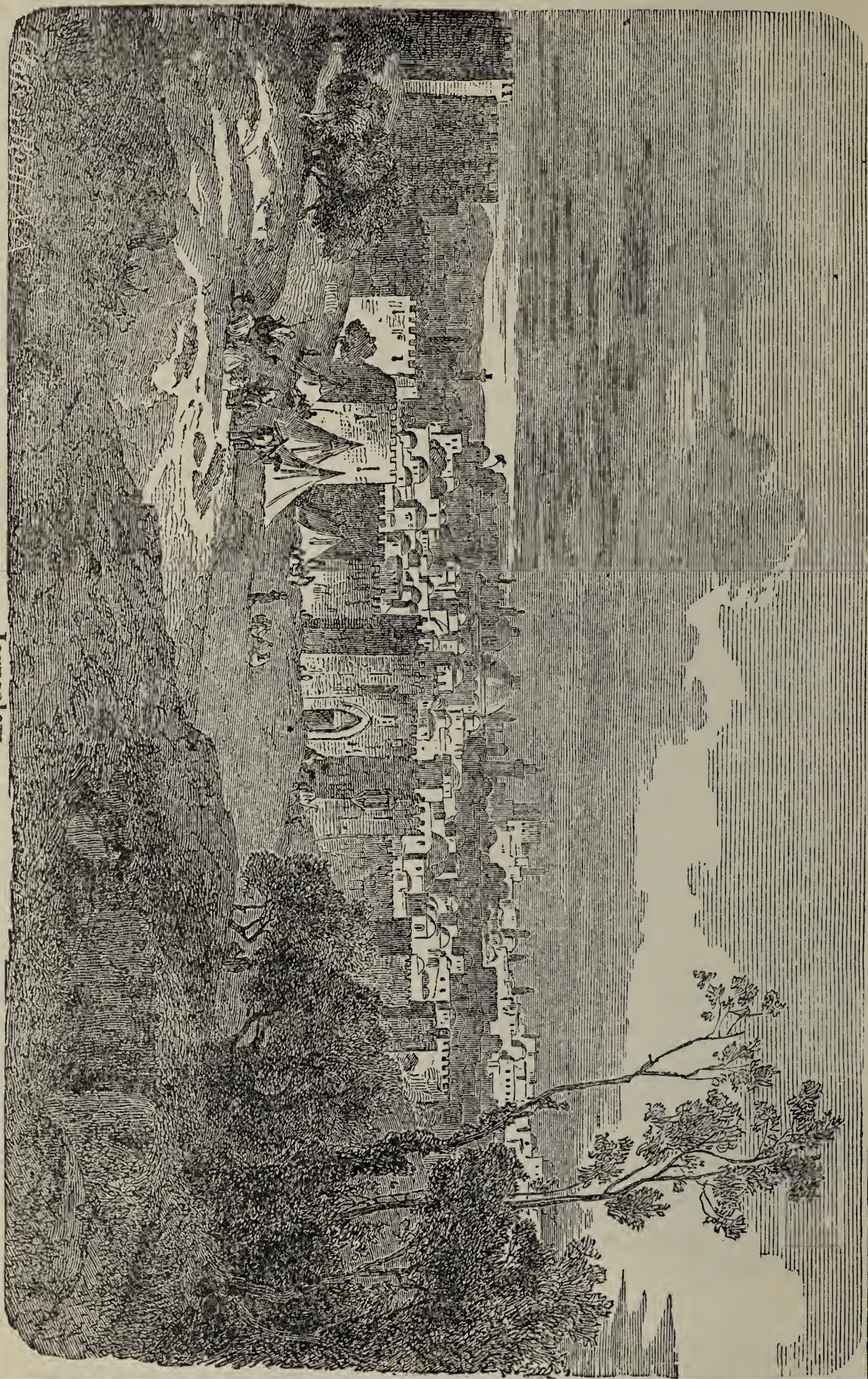


St. George's Church at Lydda.

and water are between you and the object of your desire. Now, since it is not in your power to make such a pilgrimage, I shall give you a short description of one in words and by illustrations.



Jerusalem.





The Holy Land, or Palestine, as it is often called, extends in a narrow strip along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean sea. On account of its diminutive size the heathens cast ridicule upon it saying: "The god of the Jews must be a little god, because he could not give his people a larger country." But it was just this small country that God chose wherein to perform the greatest act of His love, the redemption of mankind: as St. Paul says, "God hath chosen the little to confound the great."

At the time of our Redeemer the Holy Land was divided into four provinces: Judea, the largest and most southern portion; Galilee, occupying the entire northern part; Samaria, the smallest province lying between those two; and Perea, comprising all of the land east of the river Jordan.

The pilgrim coming across the sea from the west to Jaffa,\* is delighted with the scene that meets his eye. The country rising gradually from the shore, appears like one vast garden. Flowery meadows bedecked with roses, lilies and tulips; fields of grain or of cotton wave on the hillsides; white groves of orange trees, of citron and of olive beautify the country with their graceful foliage.

The vicinity of Jaffa seems truly a paradise; but beyond it spreads itself out as a vast barren tract extending along the Jordan up to the very walls of Jerusalem. It is not, however, really barren, for it needs only industrious hands to make it again a land flowing with milk and honey.

Having passed the gardens of Jaffa with their flowers and fruits, the pilgrim journeys on past the clay huts of the lazy inhabitants, through the once fertile, but now desolate plain of Sharon. After four hours traveling Ramleh is reached; Ramleh, the former Arimathea, now a place filled with ruins of its by-gone splendor. Two miles further on through orange groves, and he arrives at Lydda. This is the town where St. Peter healed the paralytic Aeneas, and whence he hastened on to Joppe to recall from death the maiden Tabitha. At present Lydda is a town of 3000 inhabitants. Here also are to be seen the grand ruins of the church of St. George which the early Christians had built over the grave of that holy martyr. From Lydda the pilgrim pursues his way on a turnpike road through a gently rolling plain until he reaches the mountains of Judea. Here nothing meets the gaze but towering crags and barren rocks; the further he penetrates into these highlands, for mountains they can hardly be called, the more uninviting becomes the scenery; even the valleys are void of either trees or plants. Up and down the way continues, over rocky hill-crest, through gloomy ravines, until at last after a tiresome ride of twenty-five miles the last summit is reached.

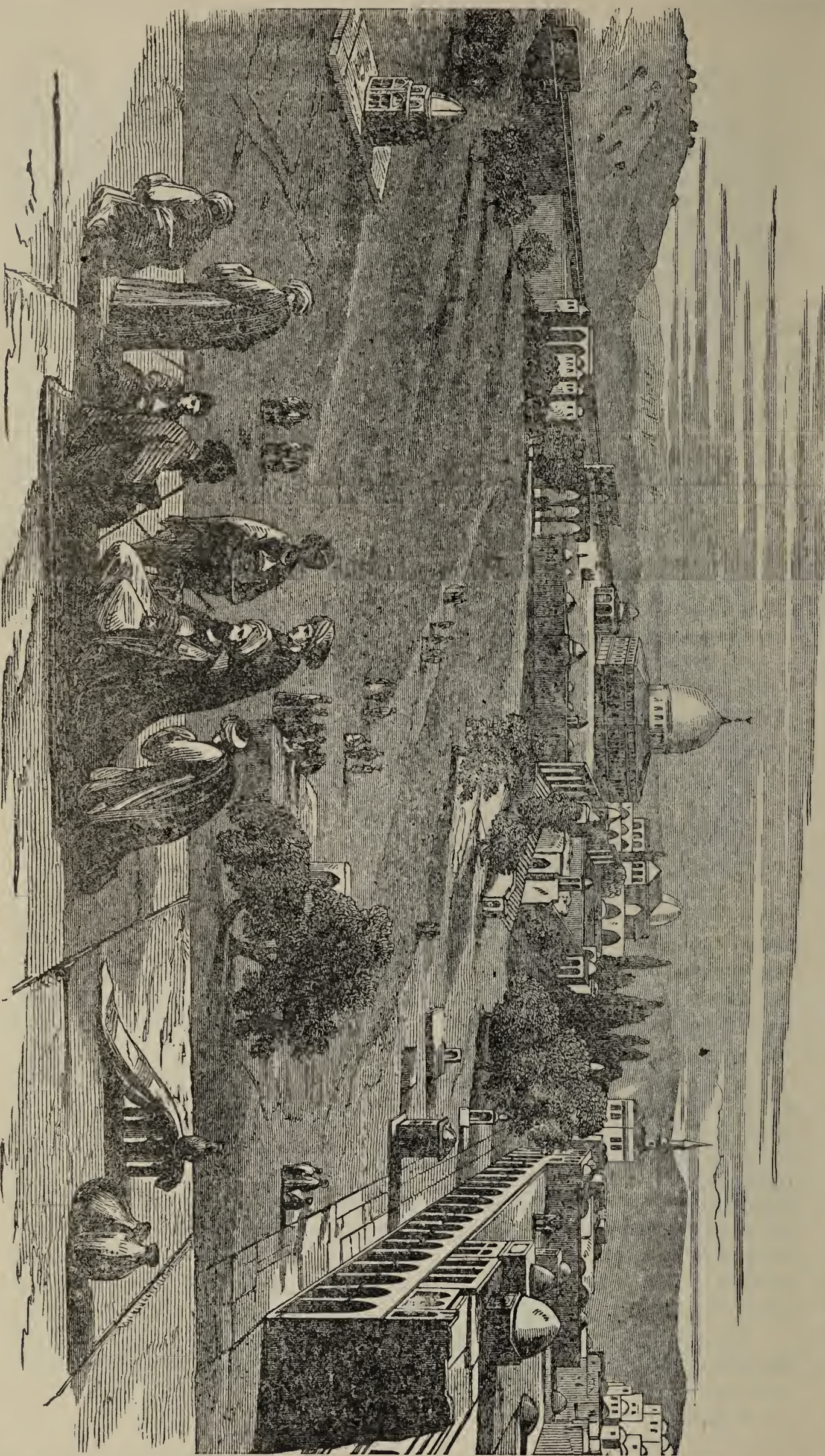
On a sudden the scene is changed, and desolation gives way to beauty, as the fair peak of the mount of Olives rises into view. In the south and close to the horizon are seen the hills of Bethlehem; towards the east appear the gray outlines of the Moab Mountains pointing out the location of the Dead Sea. A few steps more and Jerusalem, the Holy City, bursts on the sight, bathed in all the glory of the setting sun. An indescribable thrill touches the heart of the pilgrim as he gazes upon the towers of this once mighty city; involuntarily he falls upon his knees, and kissing the ground sheds tears of devotion. The wished-for object of the journey is reached and the pilgrim enters the city.

Jerusalem at the time of Abraham was called Salem, and here resided the priest-king Melchisedech. Among the Jebusites it was styled Jebus; after-

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\* Jaffa was called in the days of Christ Joppe.





The Site of the Temple, in Jerusalem.





### Stone of Unction.

wards it became known as Jerusalem, "the dwelling of peace." From the fact that the Ark of the Covenant was here deposited and that it contained the temple of Jehovah it was named "City of God", "Holy City", "City of the Great King."

It was then, as now, built upon four hills. The highest point is Mount Sion. Around it, on its slopes, is clustered that portion of the city known as the City of David. On this mount the Ark was kept previous to the erection of the temple. The hill Moria, whereon stood the Temple of Solomon, is next in height. North-east of Sion rises the summit of Akra, and north of Akra is Bezetha. On this hill the new city was built in after-times. This majestic city seated upon four hills was surrounded in the days of her pride by massive walls and strong towers; she also claimed at the time of her first siege 600,000 inhabitants, whilst now she has only 17,000.

Our Redeemer foretold the destruction of this proud city because it did not profit of the time of its visitation by His grace. In the year 70 Titus,



son of the Roman emperor Vespasian, marched with an army against Jerusalem and fulfilled the punishment predicted to that godless and deicidal city. After a fearful and very obstinate siege he conquered it, burned the temple, killed the inhabitants and led 97,000 of them into captivity. The city was razed, only a few towers were left standing as a monument of the great victory. The Jews living in the provinces revolted against the Romans, and when in the year 130 A. D. the Emperor Adrian, who had rebuilt the city and called it Aelia Capitolina, prohibited circumcision among the Jews, and everywhere favored idolatry, the last fearful revolt broke out. The Roman commander of the army, Severus, now turned the whole land into a desert, and under pain of capital punishment prohibited the Jews to reside in Jerusalem. In the holy city a Christian congregation had already been formed, whose first bishop was James the apostle. This congregation had much to suffer from the tyranny of the Roman emperors, until finally, through the Emperor Constantine, protection and free practice of religious duties were granted to the Church. This emperor and his mother Helena caused more than thirty churches and chapels to be built on those sanctified places in the Holy Land. And henceforth many Christians from the West made pilgrimages thither. These pilgrimages, however, ceased, almost altogether, when the Saracens had conquered the Holy Land and planted on its soil the crescent instead of the cross. The Christians were cruelly oppressed and their churches desecrated. Therefore the Christian nations of the West rose up to free Jerusalem and the Holy Land from the hands of the Mohammedans. The crusades commenced, and Godfrey of Bouillon took the Holy City in 1099 by storm. Not even 150 years the holy places remained in the hands of the Christians, who, sad to tell, desecrated by many sins the holy sepulchre of Him in whom they believed. The Turks again became the masters of the Holy Land, and have it in possession to the present day. The Christians who live there and those who come on pilgrimages hither are, however, not exposed to so many oppressions as formerly; they possess many holy places although dependant upon the Turks, and the pilgrims may visit them without molestation.

### THE STONE OF UNCTION.

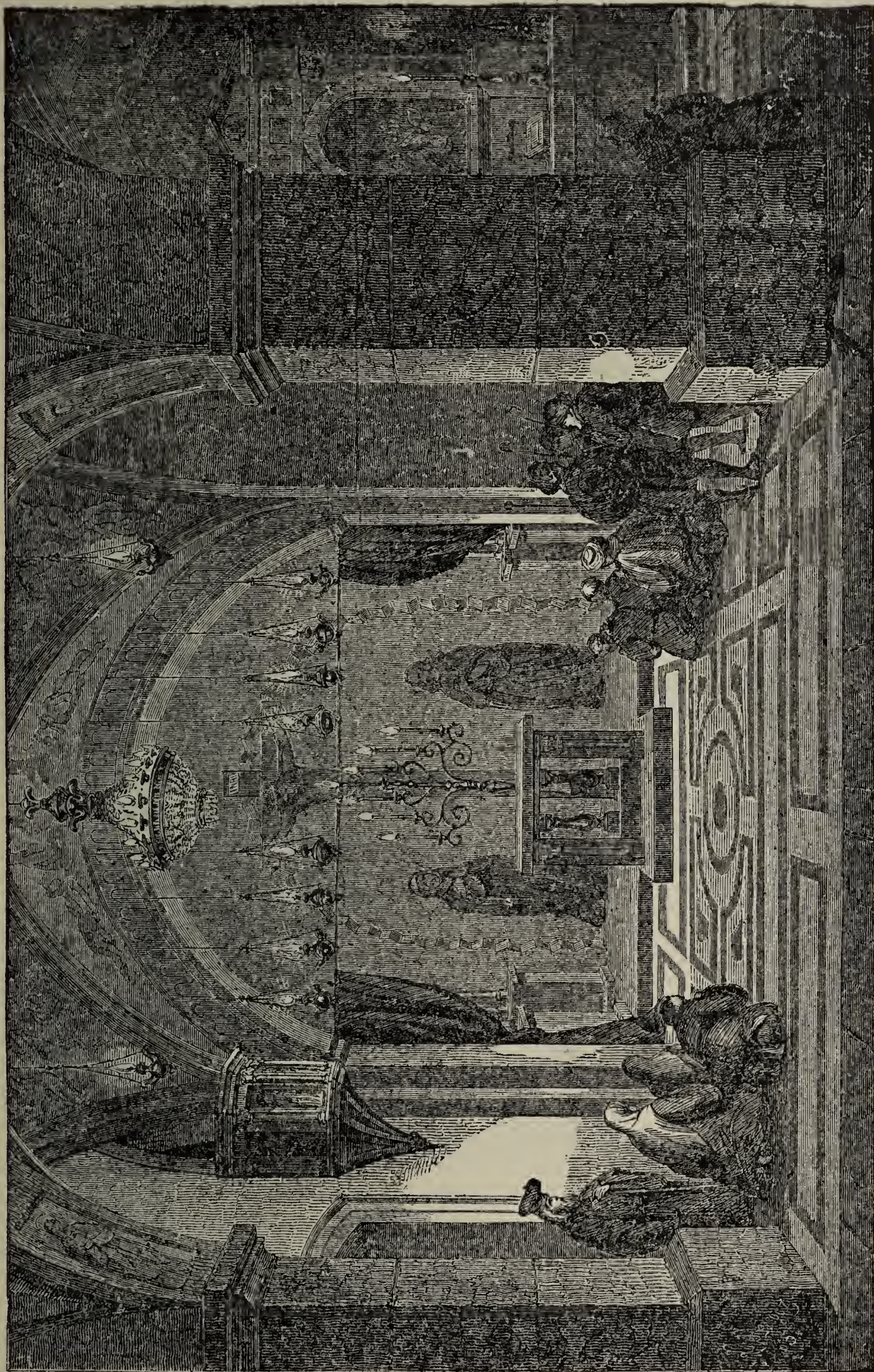
The grand purpose for which the journey has been undertaken is to visit the church of the Holy Sepulchre. This church stands in the north-western part of Jerusalem upon a hill known in those days as Golgotha,\* and which at the time of Christ was outside the city. It includes under one large roof three of the oldest churches besides surrounding chapels. The churches are those of the Resurrection, or more properly that of the sepulchre, of the Crucifixion† and of the Finding of the Cross.†† Entering the portal and passing by a group of Turkish soldiers, the pilgrim sees before him the Stone of Unction surrounded by large candlesticks. This stone is in the centre of the hall, having been spared by the fire of 614 A. D., when the sepulchre was burned and Zacharias the patriarch of Jerusalem taken away captive. It is honored as the spot whereon Christ's body was laid and anointed by Joseph

\* Golgotha is the modern Calvary. It received the name Golgotha, which signifies the place of a skull, from an old tradition that says, the skull of Adam was here deposited by Melchisedech.

† This stands upon the spot where the cross was placed when Christ was nailed to it.

†† Erected over the place here the true cross was found by the Empress Helena.





Golgotha.

of Arimathea and Nicodemus preparatory to burial. At the right of this hall is the rock of Calvary or Golgotha inclosed by a stone wall and covered by





**Church of the Sepulchre. Interior view.**

a chapel. A flight of 18 steps leads up to it. This chapel is divided into two apartments; the northern one marking the place where the cross rested





### Tomb of the Blessed Virgin.

when they were nailing Christ thereon, the southern one commemorating the spot where it was erected. A round silver-framed opening in the floor of this division, near the foot of the crucifix and crowned with a little canopy, indicates the exact spot where the cross stood. Near it is the rent in the rock produced by the earthquake at the death of Christ. This rent is about eight inches wide and runs down to a depth of twenty feet so that it may be seen in the chapel of Adam which is a cove directly beneath this. Two round black stones mark the places of the crosses of the two thieves. Leaving this chapel and descending the stairs by which he came, the pilgrim passes to the opposite side of the hall, and enters the church of the sepulchre proper. This church in the form of a rotunda consists of an immense dome resting upon sixteen marble columns. Underneath this dome is an oblong building rounded off at the back, and surrounded by a small cupola. It is constructed of a reddish colored marble brought from the Red Sea and incloses the rock wherein lies the Holy Sepulchre. Hanging down from a gallery encircling the centre of the large dome and fastened to the top of the chapel are generally seen curtains of silk bearing representations of the resurrection and the ascension of our Sav-

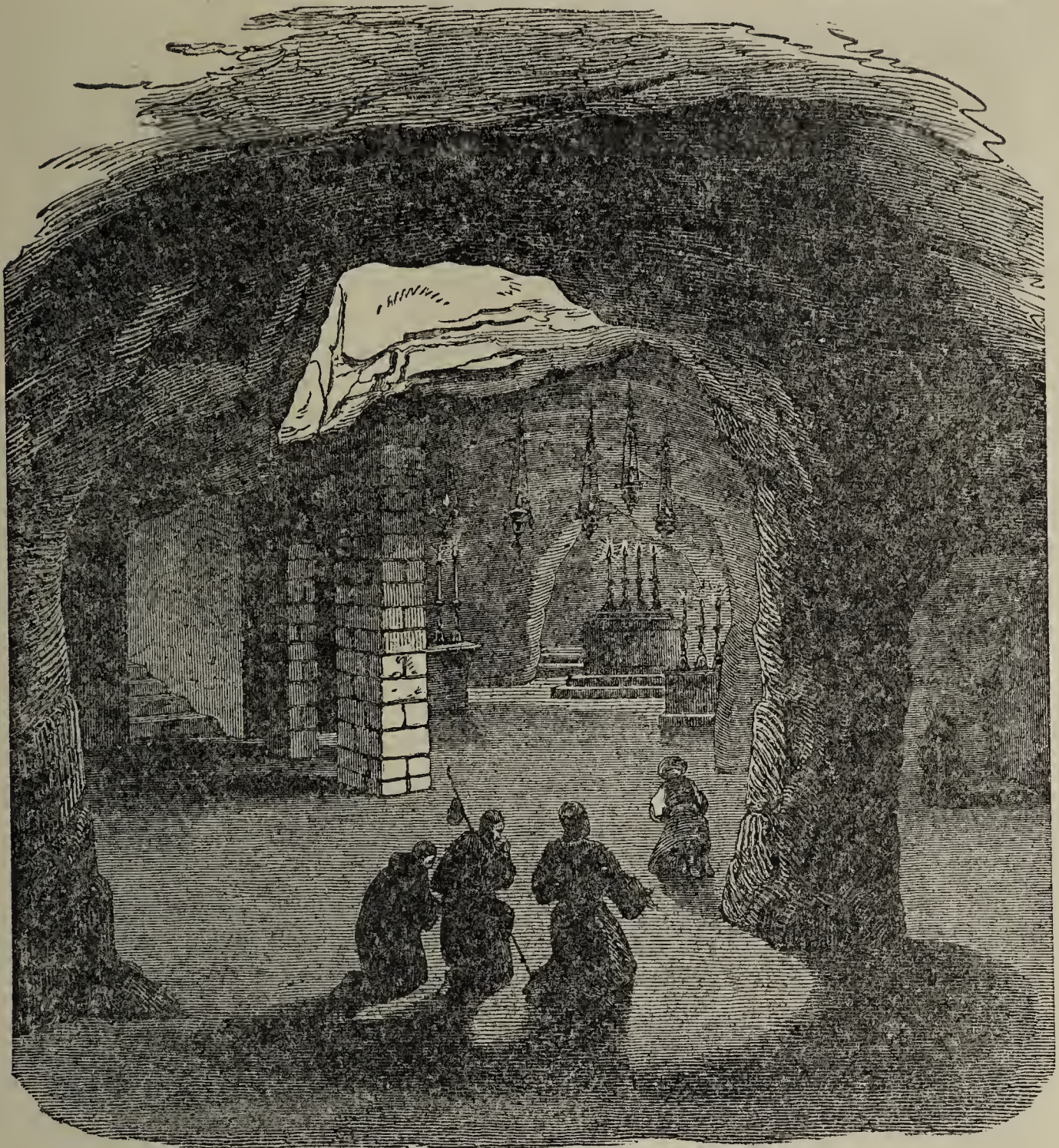


Gethsemane.



our. Entering the ante-chapel, or chapel of the angel, and viewing the stone whereon the angel sat when he announced the resurrection to the holy women, we pass through a narrow door about four feet high, into the Holy Sepulchre itself. This cave is so small that it will scarcely hold four persons. It is illuminated by more than fifty lamps. The marble sarcophagus that contained the dead body of our Lord is about six feet long by three wide, and it has the shape of an altar. Mass is daily said here by the Franciscans who have



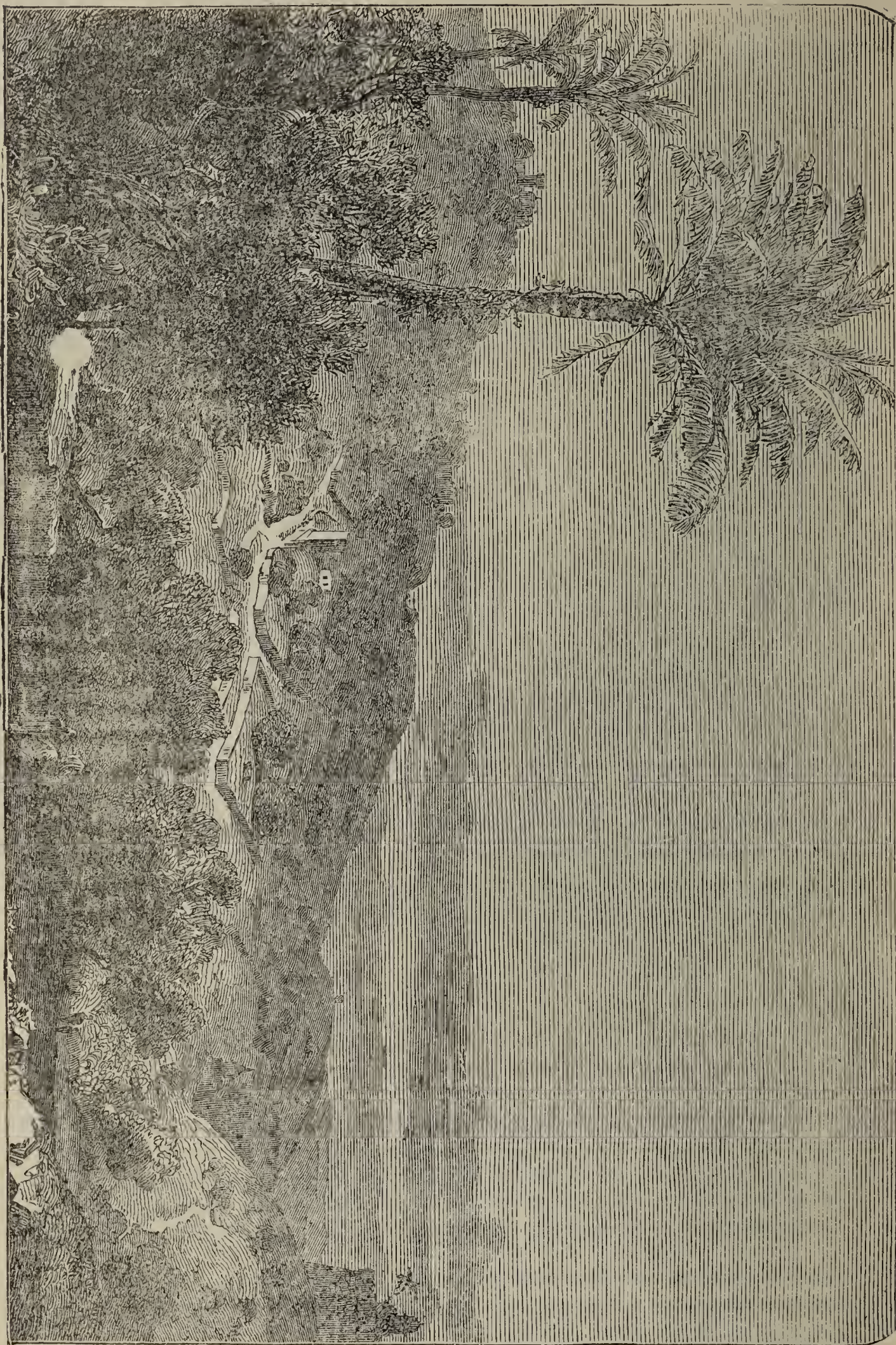


**Grotto of the Agony.**

charge of this holy shrine. Leaving the Sepulchre and the Chapel of the Angel we go westward and reach the altar commemorating the spot where Christ appeared to Mary Magdalen after the resurrection, and then we enter the chapel of the apparition to Mary, venerating the place where the risen Saviour appeared to His beloved Mother. At the right of the entrance is shown a portion of the column at which Christ was scourged. Passing on further we reach a chamber called the prison of the Lord, because here our Lord was kept until the hole for the foot of the cross was dug. Coming down from the Golgotha church into the church of the sepulchre we find on the right the Chapel of Derision, containing the stone upon which Jesus sat when crowned with thorns; here He suffered the indignities and the mockeries of the soldiers. From it we reach a subterranean chapel dedicated to St. Helena, and a flight of thirteen steps takes us to the chapel of the Finding of the Cross, (a little rocky space somewhat illuminated,) where the cross of Christ was found. Ascending from these chapels into the church we pass the place where lots were cast for the garments of our Lord.



Mount Olivet.



Having passed through the holy places of the Church of the Sepulchre we will now enter on the way upon which our Saviour carried the cross to mount Calvary. It is called the Via Dolorosa, the sorrowful



way. Its length is about seven hundred yards. Pieces of columns and stones erected mark the stations of the passion of our Lord. The way of the cross begins at the judgment hall of Pilate. Even in our times a building is pointed out which is said to be Pilate's judgment hall, and also the arch of the terrace is shown from which Pilate exhibited to the people our Saviour crowned with thorns, scourged and mocked; Pilate pointing at Him said: "Ecce homo!" "Behold the man!" Opposite the house of Pilate stands the beautiful church of the Scourging. Here the street turns and we approach the station where our Saviour met His sorrowful mother; at a little distance on is the place where Simon of Cyrene assisted our Redeemer in carrying the cross. Now we ascend the hill, and we come to the house of Veronica and the places where Jesus fell under the weight of the cross, and spoke to the weeping women of Jerusalem. The rest of the stations are within the church of the Sepulchre. This way of the cross was undoubtedly first visited by the Mother of Jesus, and since then thousands and thousands have imitated her example and have moistened these holy spots with tears of repentance, love and gratitude.

Besides the way of the cross the pilgrims also visit the holy places in the neighborhood of Jerusalem.—Having crossed the bridge of the brook Cedron, we behold the sepulchre of the Blessed Virgin, which has since been changed into a church. God would not permit that the grave should retain that body which had been the dwelling-place of Life; united to the holy soul it was assumed into heaven. This chapel is square and very small. The grave itself is a high tomb of marble, the cover of which is likewise of black veined marble. This sepulchre of the Blessed Virgin lies at the foot of Mount Olivet near the Garden Gethsemane, where Judas betrayed his Lord and Master, and where our Saviour gave Himself over to His enemies. At present this is only a very small piece of land shaded from time immemorial by eight olive trees. Around it the Franciscans have erected a stone wall.

According to the gospel, our Saviour withdrew a stone's cast, fell upon the ground and prayed . . . "and being in an agony, he prayed the longer. And his sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground." (*Luke* xxii. 43, 44.) This mystery of the passion is venerated in the Grotto of the Agony; a flight of stairs leads down into the grotto. Two pilasters and three columns support the ceiling, in the midst of which an opening covered with lattice-work admits the light; to the east of this chapel there are three altars erected, and illuminated by lamps.

From this grotto two roads lead to the top of Mount Olivet where the church of the Ascension of our Lord stands, here we find the stone from which our Lord ascended into heaven; it shows the impression of one foot. Now the way leads to the graves of the prophets into the valley of Josaphat, where are also found the graves of the kings Zacharias, Absalom and Josaphat.

On the declivity of Mount Moria, where once stood the temple is the fount of Silvah, also called Mary's Well, because the Holy Virgin often came hither, and from this a subterranean canal leads the pilgrim to the pond Silvah memorable on account of the cure of the man born blind, whom our Saviour ordered to wash here. Westward we approach the vale Hinnom where lies the Potter's Field, Haceldama, which the Jews purchased with the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Judas' betrayal. Outside of the present city walls, towards the South, stands Mount Sion with David's tomb, an irregular building with a Turkish Mosque. In this building besides David's tomb is the Hall of the Lord's Supper; a flight of stairs leads up to this hall. The hall itself was erected in the fourteenth century upon the place where our Saviour instituted the Sacrament of the Altar. Up to Mount Moria, upon which now stands



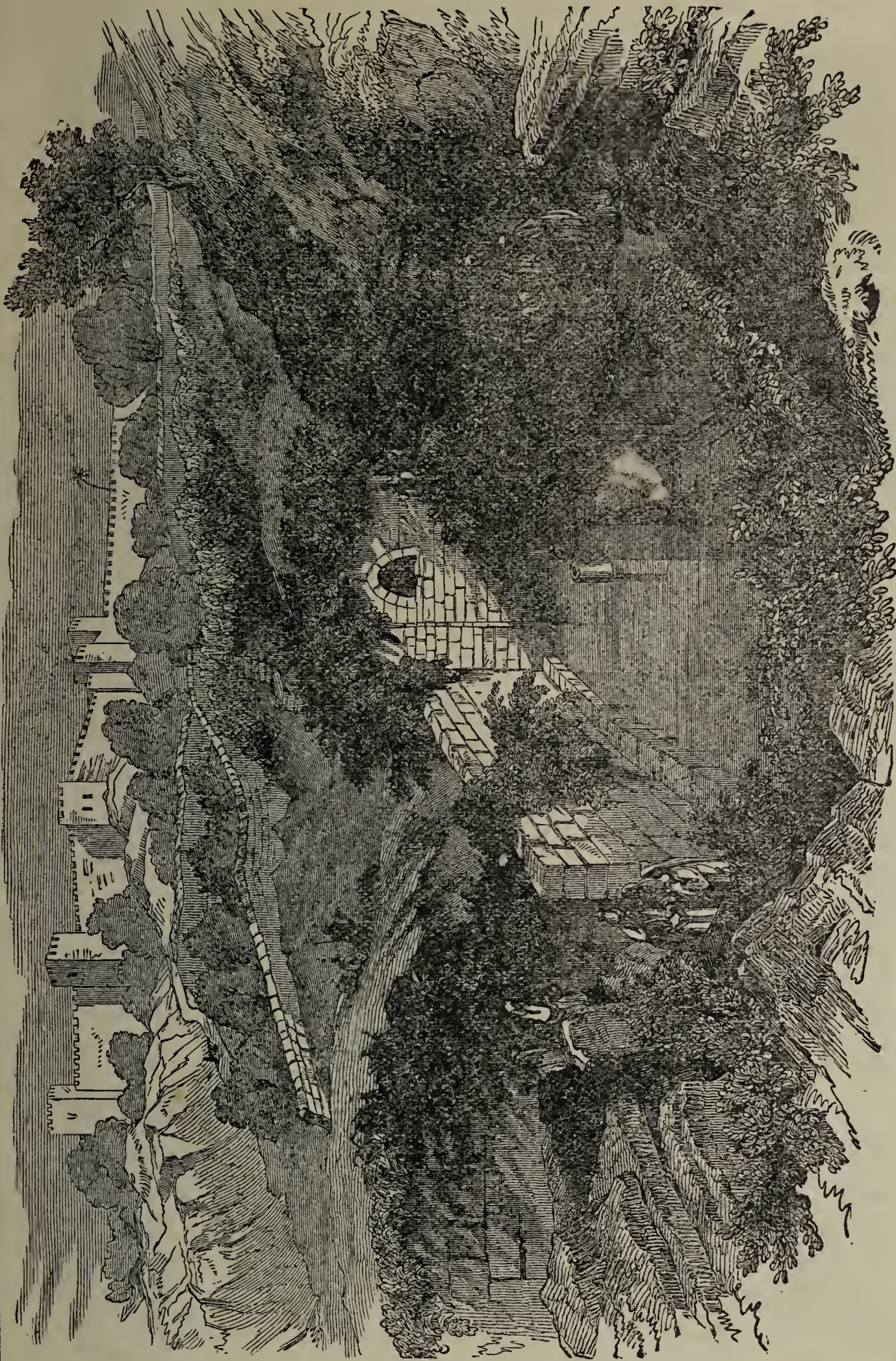


**Hall of the Last Supper.**

Omar's Mosque, leads the Golden Gate through which Jesus entered on Palm Sunday, and which the Turks have closed, because according to an old prophecy the Christians will at some future time enter victoriously.

These are the Most celebrated places of Jerusalem and which the pilgrim visits with great emotion. Having satisfied the ardor of his devotion, he neglects not to visit also those places of the Holy Land which our Saviour has rendered sacred because He passed there His childhood and was there when preaching His divine doctrine. Our desire is satisfied when we reach Bethlehem; passing through the gate of Jaffa we cross the bridge over the brook Gihon and we soon arrive at the large turpentine tree under which the holy Virgin rested with the Infant Jesus on her way to Egypt. At some little distance is the well where the Magi again saw the star; midway between Jerusalem and Bethlehem at our left stands upon an elevation the great monastery Elias, from where we once more look back to Jerusalem and further on we see Bethlehem located on a height. Now the pilgrim passes by the tomb of Rachel, the mother of the Egyptian Joseph, and finally arrives at the place where angels announced to the shepherds the birth of the Redeemer. This place is about three quarters of a mile from Bethlehem; near it is the village where the shepherds lived. A rough road between vineyards and olive plantations leads up the back of a mountain, on the front declivity of which lies Bethlehem with its white houses. The present industrious inhabitants, of this formerly highly celebrated city, are all Christians. The sacred birth-place of our Redeemer is a few hundred steps from Bethlehem, and lies eastward upon a height at the back of the hill. The large monastery which is inhabited by Catholics, Greeks



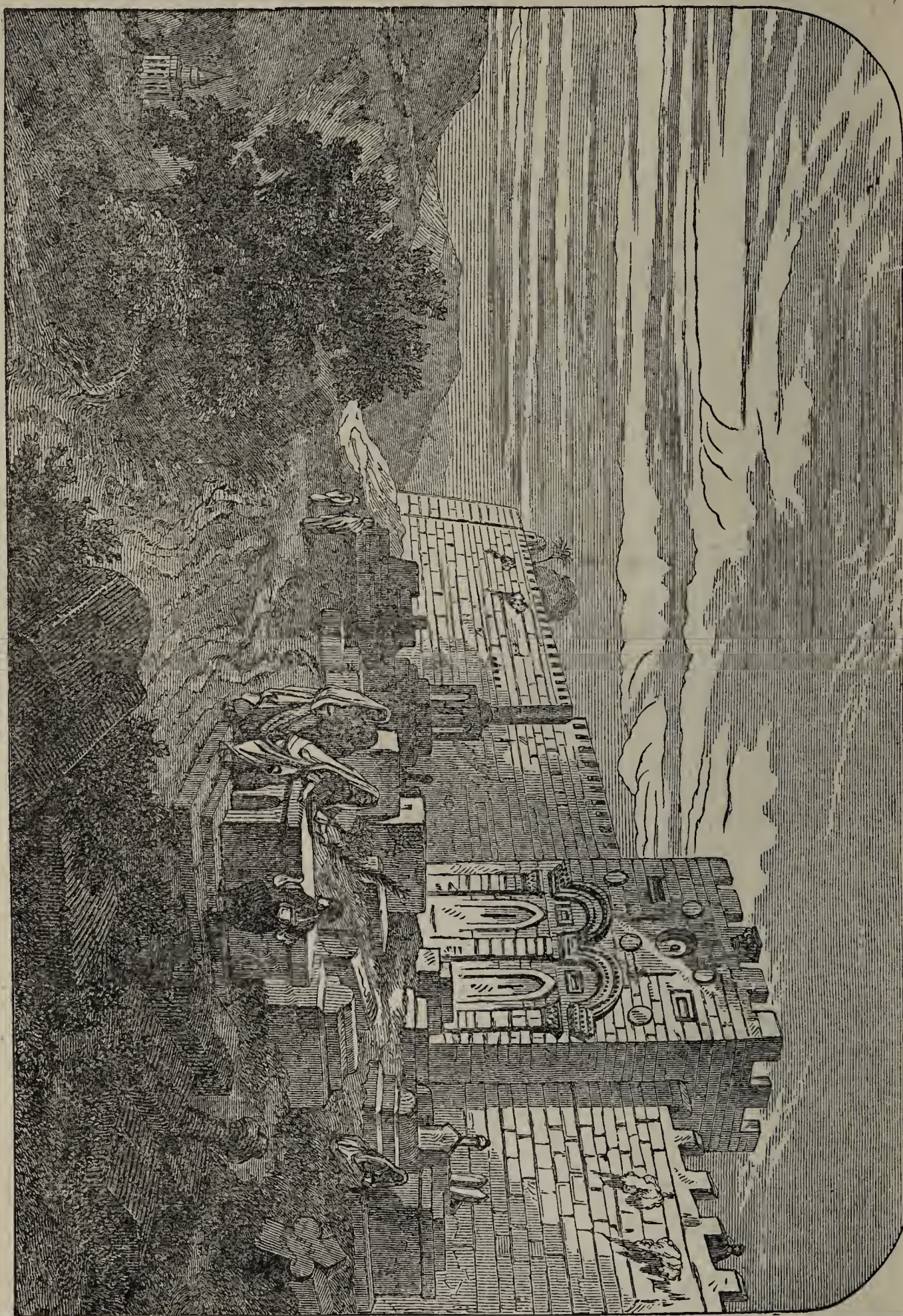


Fount of Silvan.

and Armenians, presents, with its three churches and buildings of divers forms, an imposing aspect. Through a narrow gate we arrive in the front court, from which we come through a small door into the church of the Nativity. The Emperor Constantine built this church over the grotto or stable where Christ



The Golden Gate.



our Lord was born; it is built in the form of a cross and contains five naves. The ceiling is of beams of Cypress wood; the roof is of lead. From the high altar two flights of stairs lead into the grotto, a cave where the shepherds used to seek protection from the inclemency of the weather. There are more such caves around Bethlehem; this one is now transformed into a chapel which is





### The Valley of the Shepherds.

thirty feet long, eleven feet wide, and nine feet high, and its walls and floor are covered with beautiful slabs of marble, and thirty-two lamps illumine its interior. Back on the Eastern side is the main chamber of the cave, the chapel of the Birth of Christ. A star of white marble surrounded by brilliant rays of silver, upon which are the words: "Hic de virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est." "Here is born of the Virgin Mary Christ Jesus," indicates the spot where our Saviour first saw the light of the world. Six or seven steps south of this spot we descend three steps and again three to the place where the Blessed Mother laid the Infant in the manger. — The dazzling light of the lamps and candles reflects into the cavity, where stood the wooden crib which is now kept in Rome. Opposite the crib is the altar of the Magi, the place where they adored the divine Infant.—The whole sacred Grotto of the Birth of Christ is in possession of the Franciscans. Around it there are several others. The first of importance is the burying-place of the Holy Innocents; the second the school of St. Jerome, where this holy Father of the Church translated the Holy Scriptures; the third contains the grave of St. Eusebius of Cremona, who was a disciple of St. Jerome, and in the fourth rest the bones





Ponds of Solomon.

of St. Paula and her daughter Eustachia, noble Romans, who here in quiet solitude led a contemplative life.

Immediately behind the monastery an open cave in a rock is seen, called the Milk-Grotto, where Mary remained during the infanticide at Bethlehem.—Following up an aqueduct we reach the large Ponds and a mile and a quarter further the Closed Gardens, both the work of King Solomon.

Nearly fifteen miles south of Bethlehem the town Hebron is situated in a narrow valley. Here Abraham, Isaac and Jacob lived and “walked with the Lord;” here also they lie buried; their graves are seen in the Mosque of the Turks ornamented by costly carpets. Here King David lived. Two miles and a half distant in the valley Mambre the house of Abraham is pointed out to us; at present it is only a pile of ruins; also an old oak tree is standing on the spot where the Lord appeared to this patriarch.

In one of the valleys abundantly blessed with the finest grapes and olives south-west from Jerusalem stands the monastery of St. John with the most beautiful Catholic churches of the Holy Land. The birth-place of St. John the Baptist is here shown. A mile and a half from this is venerated the place





### Philip's Well.

of the visitation of Mary, and south of the monastery of St. John is the fountain of Philip, the place where the Apostle Philip baptized the chamberlain of the queen of Candace. About two miles from St. John's stands the monastery of the Holy Cross, the place where the tree stood of which the cross of our Saviour was made.

On his return home the pilgrim generally takes the route between the Dead Sea, Mount Carmel and the Lebanon, to visit the interesting and holy spots which lie in that direction, and especially to see Nazareth. Having crossed Mount Olivet he arrives at Bethany, where Lazarus lived with his sisters Mary and Martha. Our Lord often called at their house, and it was in this place that He raised Lazarus from the grave. From Bethany the road leads through a lonesome mountainous desert towards Jericho. In this desert our Lord was tempted by the devil. Jericho is now an insignificant place full of ruins of ancient glory. In one hour's journey from Jericho the pilgrim reaches the Jordan, the place where John baptized our Saviour; returning he comes to Bir where a dilapidated church marks the place where Mary missed the Saviour on her return from the temple. After this he reaches Bethel, where Jacob saw the vision of angels, and from here the province of Samaria.





Mount Thabor.



In a beautiful and fertile valley surrounded by mountains lies the fountain, formerly called Jacob's well, where our Lord met the Samaritan woman. About a mile and a quarter distant we enter the former land of Sichem, now called Nablus, where Abraham encamped and Jacob raised his tents, between the mountains Hebal and Garizim. Not far distant the tomb of the patriarch Joseph is visible. Six miles and a quarter from Garizim lies Samaria, now an insignificant place, in which are the ruins of the once magnificent church of St. John. In the midst of these ruins stands a Turkish Mosque which contains the grave of St. John the Baptist. Now the road leads over the anterior of a high mountain to the ruins of Bethulia where the pious widow Judith lived, and through a narrow, rocky valley we reach the border of Galilee. A magnificent plain spreads itself before the eyes of the pilgrim; it is the plain of Esdrelon. The further we now go northward the more the mountains withdraw, and we behold in the distance Mount Thabor. In the midst of the plain Esdrelon we cross the brook Cison, where the Prophet Elias killed the priests of Baal, then we cross the mountains of Galilee and coming down into a narrow valley we reach the road to Nazareth, after Jerusalem and Bethlehem the most celebrated place of the Holy Land. Every pilgrim lingers in quiet devotion at the spot where the angel of the Lord announced to the Blessed Virgin the coming of the Saviour. Nazareth is an insignificant town of three thousand inhabitants. The finest building there is the Latin Monastery, with the richly decorated Church of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin. Near the entrance of the church we descend a flight of marble steps into a chapel the ceiling and walls of which are of solid rock. This place is venerated as the chamber where the angel announced to Mary the Incarnation. Frequently chambers are cut into the rocky mountains in Nazareth and the houses are connected with these chambers, such was the house of the Blessed Virgin. This little house is at present in Loretto near Rome, having been carried thither by angels. An altar of marble now adorns that chamber used as a chapel; near this altar stand two columns, one at the place where Mary stood, and one where the angel appeared and saluted her. The marble floor bears the inscription in gold: "Verbum hic caro factum est." "Here the Word was made flesh." Near the Church is a chapel built over the place where the house of St. Joseph stood. Even now a pillar of it is shown. At one side of the city is the Well of Mary from which the Blessed Virgin drew water. On a cliff three hundred feet high, from where the Jews wished to cast our Saviour down, stands an altar, and in a ravine near the town is also shown a large table rock within a chapel upon which our Lord sat several times while speaking with His disciples after His resurrection. As we pass the Well of the Blessed Virgin, we ascend an elevation from which we can see the old Sapphoris, the dwelling-place of St. Joachim and Anna. Four miles and three quarters distant lies Cana, where Jesus at the marriage feast changed water into wine. Proceeding from here a short distance, we behold to our left a somewhat lengthy mountain, having two peaks. The Christians call this the mountain of the Beatitudes, because our Saviour preached His sermon on the Mount from one of these peaks. Passing on a few steps on this elevation the eye is agreeably surprised in beholding suddenly below the bright mirror of Lake Genesareth, on the green shores of which the Saviour loved to linger. Into this lake empties the Jordan, which flows through the Holy Land from north to south and finally disappears in the Dead Sea. South-west of Lake Genesareth rises the mount of the Transfiguration of Christ, Thabor. Ruins of churches and monasteries cover the whole surface of the mountain from whose





High-priests and priests.

peak one enjoys a ravishing view. Not far from Thabor lies Naim where Christ raised to life the son of the widow. Mount Carmel was the favorite place where Elias and Eliseus loved to stay, and the Christians imitated their example, for many of them lived on these heights as hermits. These hermits are the predecessors of the Carmelites, whose splendid monastery commands an extensive view of the Mediterranean. —

If the pilgrim leaves the Holy Land via Byrut he will undoubtedly pay a visit to Mount Lebanon. This is a mountain which contains the loveliest orange gardens, immense forests, the most pleasant spots, and the wildest rocky chasms; its inhabitants are the faithful Catholic Maronites, and the heathenish Druses. From Lebanon, the pilgrim visits Damascus, famous on account of the conversion of St. Paul, the apostle; a mile and a quarter from Damascus the place is marked out where Paul fell to the ground and heard the voice of Jesus: "Saul, why dost thou persecute me." Into the city leads a gate bearing the name of St. Paul, and a street bearing that of Ananias. Returning from Damascus some pilgrims visit the ancient Saida, Sidon, situated on the shore of the Mediterranean. Our Saviour visited this place, and St. Paul remained here some days. Having returned to Byrut the pilgrim embarks, and deeply impressed, returns to his beloved home. —



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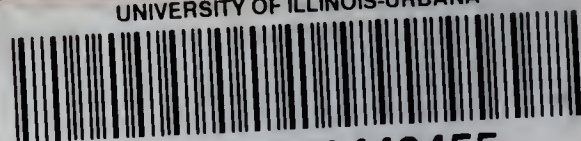
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